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UTILITY PATENT APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL

(Only for new nonprovisional applications under 37 CFR 1.53(b))

Attorney Docket No. 684.3054

First Named Inventor or Application Identifier

IZUMI TSUKAMOTO, ET AL.

Express Mail Label No.

APPLICATION ELEMENTS

See MPEP chapter 600 concerning utility patent application contents.

ADDRESS TO:

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Box Patent Application
Washington, DC 202311. ☐ Fee Transmittal Form
(Submit an original, and a duplicate for fee processing)2. ☒ Specification Total Pages 1053. ☒ Drawing(s) (35 USC 113) Total Sheets 214. ☒ Oath or Declaration Total Pages 2a. ☐ Newly executed (original or copy)b. ☒ Unexecuted for information purposesc. ☐ Copy from a prior application (37 CFR 1.63(d))
(for continuation/divisional with Box 17 completed)
[Note Box 5 below]i. ☐ DELETION OF INVENTOR(S)Signed Statement attached deleting
inventor(s) named in the prior application, see
37 CFR 1.63(d)(2) and 1.39(b).5. ☐ Incorporation By Reference (useable if Box 4c is checked)
The entire disclosure of the prior application, from which a copy of
the oath or declaration is supplied under Box 4c, is considered as
being part of the disclosure of the accompanying application and is
hereby incorporated by reference therein.6. ☐ Microfiche Computer Program (Appendix)7. Nucleotide and/or Amino Acid Sequence Submission
(if applicable, all necessary)a. ☐ Computer Readable Copyb. ☐ Paper Copy (identical to computer copy)c. ☐ Statement verifying identity of above copies

ACCOMPANYING APPLICATION PARTS

8. ☐ Assignment Papers (cover sheet & document(s))9. ☐ 37 CFR 3.73(b) Statement (when there is an assignee) ☐ Power of Attorney10. ☐ English Translation Document (if applicable)11. ☐ Information Disclosure Statement (IDS)/PTO-1449 ☐ Copies of IDS Citations12. ☒ Preliminary Amendment13. ☒ Return Receipt Postcard (MPEP 503)
(Should be specifically itemized)14. ☐ Small Entity ☐ Statement filed in prior application
Statement(s) Status still proper and desired15. ☐ Certified Copy of Priority Document(s)
(if foreign priority is claimed)16. ☐ Other: _____

17. If a CONTINUING APPLICATION, check appropriate box and supply the requisite information:

☐ Continuation ☐ Divisional ☐ Continuation-in-part (CIP) of prior application No. _____

18. CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS

☒ Customer Number or Bar Code Label05514
(insert Customer No. or Attach bar code label here)or ☐ Correspondence address below

NAME

Address

City

Country

State

Telephone

Zip Code

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CLAIMS	(1) FOR	(2) NUMBER FILED	(3) NUMBER EXTRA	(4) RATE	(5) CALCULATIONS
TOTAL CLAIMS (37 CFR 1.16(c))		93-20 =	73	X \$ 18.00 =	\$ 1314.00
INDEPENDENT CLAIMS (37 cfr 1.16(b))		14-3 =	11	X \$ 78.00 =	\$ 858.00
MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIMS (if applicable) (37 CFR 1.16(d))				\$ 260.00 =	\$ 260.00
				BASIC FEE (37 CFR 1.16(a))	\$ 690.00
Total of above Calculations =					\$ 3122.00
Reduction by 50% for filing by small entity (Note 37 CFR 1.9, 1.27, 1.28).					
TOTAL =					\$ 3122.00

19 Small entity status

- a. ☐ A Small entity statement is enclosed
- b. ☐ A small entity statement was filed in the prior nonprovisional application and such status is still proper and desired.
- c. ☐ Is no longer claimed.

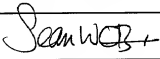
20. ☒ A check in the amount of \$ 3122.00 to cover the filing fee is enclosed.

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- a. ☒ Fees required under 37 CFR 1.16.
- b. ☐ Fees required under 37 CFR 1.17.
- c. ☐ Fees required under 37 CFR 1.18.

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT, ATTORNEY, OR AGENT REQUIRED

NAME	Sean W O'Brien - Reg. No. 37,689
SIGNATURE	
DATE	August 18, 2000

SEW\SWO\cmv

684.3054

PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:)
: Examiner: UNASSIGNED
IZUMI TSUKAMOTO, ET AL.)
: Group Art Unit: UNASSIGNED
Appln. No.: UNASSIGNED)
:
Filed: HEREWITH)
:
For: SUBSTRATE ATTRACTING AND) August 18, 2000
HOLDING SYSTEM FOR USE IN)
EXPOSURE APPARATUS)

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Sir:

Prior to examination, please amend the above-
identified application as follows.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 43 and 44 as follows:

Claim 43

Line 1, change "34" to --34, 35 or 37--.

Claim 44

Line 3, change "34-43" to --34, 35 or 37-42--; and

Line 5, change "attract" to --attracted--.



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Please add claims 46-52 as follows:

--46. A system according to Claim 36, wherein a free end of the protrusion is formed into a spherical shape.

47. An exposure apparatus, comprising:

a substrate attracting and holding system as recited in Claim 36; and

exposure means for transferring, by exposure, a pattern of an original to a substrate as attracted and held by said substrate attracting and holding system.

48. An exposure apparatus, comprising:

a substrate attracting and holding system as recited in Claim 43; and

exposure means for transferring, by exposure, a pattern of an original to a substrate as attracted and held by said substrate attracting and holding system.

49. An exposure apparatus, comprising:

a substrate attracting and holding system as recited in Claim 46; and

exposure means for transferring, by exposure, a pattern of an original to a substrate as attracted and held by said substrate attracting and holding system.

50. A device manufacturing method, characterized by producing a device through manufacturing processes including a process for exposing a substrate by use of an exposure apparatus as recited in Claim 47.

51. A device manufacturing method, characterized by producing a device through manufacturing processes including a process for exposing a substrate by use of an exposure apparatus as recited in Claim 48.

52. A device manufacturing method, characterized by producing a device through manufacturing processes including a process for exposing a substrate by use of an exposure apparatus as recited in Claim 49.--

REMARKS

Applicants request favorable consideration of the above-referenced application in view of the foregoing amendments. Claims 1-52 are pending. Claims 43 and 44 have been amended, and claims 46-52 are newly presented to avoid any improper multiple dependencies.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

Sean WOB
Attorney for Applicants

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SUBSTRATE ATTRACTING AND HOLDING SYSTEM
FOR USE IN EXPOSURE APPARATUS

FIELD OF THE INVENTION AND RELATED ART

5 This invention relates to a substrate
attracting and holding system for grasping a substrate
or workpiece and, more particularly, to a substrate
attracting and holding system for use in a
semiconductor manufacturing apparatus, a liquid
10 crystal substrate manufacturing apparatus, a magnetic
head manufacturing apparatus, a semiconductor
inspection apparatus, a liquid crystal inspection
apparatus, or a magnetic head inspection apparatus or
for use in manufacture of a micro-machine, for
15 example. In another aspect, the invention concerns an
exposure apparatus or a device manufacturing method
using such a substrate attracting and holding system.

 In reduction projection exposure apparatuses
used in the manufacture of semiconductor devices, for
20 example, enlargement of the numerical aperture (NA)
has been promoted to meet miniaturization of a device
(chip). Although the resolution is improved by a
larger numerical aperture, the effective depth of
focus is shortened on the other hand. Thus, in order
25 to maintain the resolution while keeping a sufficient
practical depth, attempts have been made reduce the
curvature of image field of a projection optical

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system or to improve the wafer flatness in regard to wafer thickness non-uniformness or flatness precision of a chuck.

One factor for causing degradation of the flatness of a wafer surface is the presence of a foreign particle caught between a chuck and a wafer. If a foreign particle of a few microns is once caught therebetween, the wafer at that portion is deformed and raised thereby. Where the effective depth of focus is 1 micron or less, local defocus occurs there and, in a worst case, a pattern defect is produced. In order to avoid degradation of the product yield rate due to such foreign particles, based on the probability, pin contact chucks (pin chucks) wherein the contact rate between a chuck and a wafer is reduced to a minimum are used prevalently.

As regards a machine for processing a substrate such as a semiconductor wafer, for semiconductor device manufacture, or a liquid crystal substrate, for liquid crystal display device manufacture, for example, a projection exposure apparatus, generally it uses a substrate attracting and holding system based on a vacuum attraction force to hold and secure a substrate (workpiece) and to correct any warp thereof to keep its flatness. Figure 31 shows an example of such substrate attracting and holding system. In the substrate attracting and

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substrate supporting protrusions which provide the chuck carrying table is determined without any specific concern to the processing region on the substrate. It is set without any positional relationship with the substrate processing region. Namely, if the substrate processing region changes, the same chuck is used continuously. Therefore, if the surface of a substrate is deformed as a result of the attraction and holding of the substrate, the deformation may cause not only a deformation of that portion of the substrate in a vertical direction but also a distortion along the plane of the substrate. Further, the layout of the substrate supporting protrusions of the chuck is determined without any specific concern to the layout of alignment marks of a substrate. If the alignment mark layout of the substrate changes, the same chuck is used continuously. While a deformation of the substrate surface resulting from the attraction and holding of the substrate may cause an error in the coordinate of an alignment mark, since the relationship between each substrate alignment marks and each substrate supporting protrusions of the chuck is unknown, it is not possible to correct the coordinate error and, therefore, the registration precision is degraded.

On the other hand, in a lithographic process among semiconductor manufacturing processes in which a

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pin pitch of 2 mm or less, so as to keep good wafer flatness at the chuck peripheral portion and good wafer flatness within the pin pitch at the chuck central portion. In this patent, it is stated that, with a pin chuck having pins disposed in a grid, the flatness within the pin pitch can be approximated by a model of a beam having both ends free-supported and that, from a desired flatness, a required pin pitch can be made 2 mm or less. However, the approximation with the beam having both ends free-supported means that the pin pitch as a whole is determined by using the condition for the support with the free end at the outer peripheral portion which condition is worse than that at the central portion. There is no disclosure about determining optimum pin pitches for the flatness at the outer peripheral portion and at the central portion, respectively. Therefore, this causes an inconvenience that the pin pitch at the central portion becomes smaller than as required and, as a result, the contact rate becomes larger than as required.

In an attempt to solving this problem, Japanese Patent No. 2821678 proposes a structure wherein the pin pitch at a central portion of a chuck is made larger than that at an outer peripheral portion of the chuck, thereby to improve the wafer flatness at the chuck outer peripheral portion and the

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chuck central portion while keeping the contact rate small. According to this proposal, it is suggested that the flatness within the pin pitch at the peripheral portion can be approximated with a model of a beam having one end fixed and another end free-supported, while the flatness within the pin pitch at the central portion can be approximated with a model of a beam having both ends fixed, and that the ratio between the pin pitches at the peripheral portion and the central portion can be optimized.

In the proposal made in Japanese Patent No. 2821678, however, there is an assumption that the attraction force is even at the outer peripheral portion of the chuck and at the central portion of it. There is no disclosure about determining optimum attraction forces for the wafer flatness at the chuck outer peripheral portion and the chuck central portion, respectively. Also, there is no disclosure about determining an optimum relationship between the pin pitch and the attraction force, for the wafer flatness.

Although such wafer flatness, that is, degradation of the wafer surface flatness due to a warp produced within the pin pitch, is in fact a problem to be solved, there is a much more serious problem that a distortion (wafer distortion) is in practice produced due to the warp within the pin

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pitch. For example, where a wafer of a 200 mm diameter being currently widely used is placed on and attracted to a pin chuck having pins arrayed in a grid with a pin pitch 2 mm, there may occur a wafer distortion of about 1/2.6 of the wafer flatness. In a semiconductor process of 0.25 micron rule, being mass-produced currently, the tolerance for the wafer flatness is 80 nm if it is set to be 10% of a depth of focus 800 nm, whereas the tolerance for the wafer distortion is 5 nm if it is set to be 10% of an overlay precision 50 nm. This value when converted into a wafer flatness becomes equal to 13 nm which is much smaller than 80 nm. Namely, it is seen that, as compared with the flatness as required by the depth of focus, the flatness as required by the overlay precision is much more strict. Conventionally, the flatness correction has been made so as to reduce the wafer flatness to a tolerance, whereas it has never been done so as to reduce the wafer distortion to a tolerance. As a result, the wafer distortion may be more than the tolerance, causing a degraded overlay precision and a decreased yield rate. Alternatively, an additional process margin may be needed, which may obstruct further miniaturization of a semiconductor device or further enlargement of integration of it.

In the aforementioned Japanese Patent No. 2821678, it is stated that, when the flatness at the

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outer peripheral portion of a wafer is made better, a positional deviation of an alignment mark at the wafer peripheral portion can be reduced like a positional deviation of an alignment mark at the wafer central portion. However, there is no quantitative statement about the alignment mark positional deviation. Further, there is no recognition of the inconvenience of a wafer distortion resulting from a warp within the pin pitch at the chuck central portion. There is no disclosure about determining an optimum relationship between the pin pitch and the attraction force, in respect to the wafer distortion. There is no disclosure about determining the relationship with respect to each of the peripheral portion and the central portion, respectively. Namely, there is no disclosure of reducing the wafer distortion to a tolerance.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is accordingly an object of the present invention to provide a substrate attracting and holding method, a substrate attracting and holding system, an exposure apparatus and/or a device manufacturing method using a substrate attracting and holding system, by which the influence, upon a substrate processing precision, of an error in coordinate of an alignment mark to be produced by

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deformation of the surface of the substrate resulting from the attraction and holding of the substrate.

In accordance with an aspect of the present invention, there is provided a substrate attracting and holding system, comprising: a holding table for holding a substrate; a protrusion provided on said holding table, said protrusion being disposed to be placed in a predetermined positional relationship with a position of an alignment mark to be used for processing the substrate or a position with respect to which an alignment mark is to be produced.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a substrate attracting and holding system, an exposure apparatus and/or a device manufacturing method using a substrate attracting and holding system, by which a distortion or degradation of a flatness of the surface of a substrate such as a wafer, for example, due to a deformation of the substrate surface to be produced when the substrate is attracted and held by using a plurality of protrusions, can be reduced so that the substrate can be attracted and held in an optimum state and that an overlay precision can be improved.

In accordance with another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a substrate attracting and holding system having a plurality of protrusions for supporting a substrate, for attracting

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and holding the substrate supported on the protrusions, characterized in that a disposition pitch L of the protrusions and an attraction force P of the substrate are set so as to satisfy a relation:

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$$P \cdot L^3 \leq [36 \cdot E \cdot h^2 \cdot dx dy] / [\sqrt{3} \cdot k \cdot c]$$

where $dx dy$ is a distortion tolerance, E is a longitudinal elasticity coefficient, h is a thickness of the substrate, c is a correction coefficient based on the protrusion disposition and k is a neutral plane correction coefficient.

These and other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will become more apparent upon a consideration of the following description of the preferred embodiments of the present invention taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figures 1A - 1C are schematic views best showing features of a substrate attracting and holding method according to the present invention, wherein Figure 1A is a plan view of an embodiment of a substrate attracting and holding system arranged in accordance with the substrate attracting and holding method of the present invention, Figure 1B is a plan view of a substrate and it shows an example of disposition of shots or dies on a substrate, and

Figure 1C shows an example of patterns of alignment marks.

Figure 2 is a schematic and sectional view of a substrate attracting and holding system in a state in which a substrate is being attracted and held thereby.

Figure 3 is a schematic view for explaining an example of errors in coordinate, per a shot, to be produced as a result of attraction and holding of a substrate.

Figure 4 is a plan view of another embodiment of a substrate attracting and holding system according to the present invention.

Figure 5 is a schematic and sectional view of a substrate attracting and holding system according to a further embodiment of the present invention, in a state in which a substrate is being attracted and held thereby.

Figures 6A - 6C are schematic views of a yet further embodiment of the present invention, wherein Figure 6A is a plan view of a substrate attracting and holding system of this embodiment, Figure 6B is a plan view of a substrate as attracted and held by the substrate attracting and holding system of this embodiment, and Figure 6C is a view for explaining the relationship between substrate supporting protrusions of the substrate attracting and holding system of this

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embodiment and the position where alignment marks are produced.

Figures 7A - 7C are schematic views of a still further embodiment of the present invention, wherein Figure 7A is a plan view of a substrate attracting and holding system of this embodiment, Figure 7B is a view for explaining the relationship between substrate supporting protrusions of the substrate attracting and holding system of this embodiment and the position where alignment marks are produced, and Figure 7C is a fragmentary perspective view of a portion adjacent to the position where alignment marks are provided, in a state wherein a substrate is being attracted and held by the substrate attracting and holding system of this embodiment.

Figure 8 is a schematic view of the structure of an exposure apparatus.

Figures 9A - 9C are schematic views, respectively, wherein Figure 9A shows a warp of a substrate as attracted and held by protrusions, Figure 9B shows a model of a beam having both ends secured, bearing a uniformly distributed load, and Figure 9C is a view for explaining the relation between the substrate surface and a neutral plane not deformed by a warp of the substrate.

Figure 10 is a schematic view of the structure of a mechanism for replacement of substrates

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and chucks.

Figures 11A and 11B show another embodiment of a substrate attracting and holding system according to the present invention, wherein Figure 11A is a plan view and Figure 11B is a sectional view of the same.

Figure 12 is a plan view of a substrate attracting and holding system according to a further embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 13 is a sectional view for explaining the state of a substrate and a central portion of a chuck as the substrate is attracted and held by a substrate attracting and holding system according to the present invention.

Figure 14 is a schematic view of a model of a beam having both ends fixed, bearing a uniformly distributed load corresponding to the stage of a warp of a substrate at a central portion of a chuck.

Figure 15 is a schematic view for explaining bending moments and flexure curves curves in the double-ends fixed beam of Figure 14.

Figure 16 is a schematic view for explaining distortion of a substrate.

Figure 17 is a schematic view for explaining disposition of pins in a grid layout.

Figure 18 is a schematic view for explaining disposition of pins in a 60-deg. staggering grid layout.

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Figure 19 is a schematic and sectional view for explaining the state of a substrate and an outer peripheral portion of a chuck, when the substrate is attracted and held by a substrate attracting and holding system according to the present invention.

Figure 20 is a schematic view of a beam having an end fixed and another free end, bearing a uniformly distributed load corresponding to the state of a warp of a substrate, at the outer peripheral portion of the chuck.

Figure 21 is a schematic and sectional view of an outer peripheral portion of a chuck of a substrate attracting and holding system, according to a yet further embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 22 is a schematic and sectional view for explaining another example of a chuck central portion.

Figure 23 is a schematic and sectional view for explaining another example of a chuck outer peripheral portion.

Figure 24 is a schematic and sectional view for explaining another example of pin-like protrusions in a substrate attracting and holding system of the present invention.

Figure 25 is a graph for explaining an example of a vacuum pressure at the central portion of a substrate and the range of pin pitch, in a substrate

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attracting and holding system of the present invention.

Figure 26 is a graph for explaining an example of a vacuum pressure at the outer peripheral portion of a substrate and the range of pin pitch, in a substrate attracting and holding system of the present invention.

Figures 27A and 27B are graphs, respectively, wherein Figure 27A shows flexure curves of a wafer within the pin pitch, and Figure 27B shows the shape of a distribution of wafer distortion within the pin pitch.

Figure 28 is a schematic view of the structure of an exposure apparatus.

Figure 29 is a flow chart of semiconductor device manufacturing processes.

Figure 30 is a flow chart for explaining details of a wafer process included in the procedure of Figure 29.

Figure 31 is a plan view of a substrate attracting and holding system of known type.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Preferred embodiments of the present invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

[First Embodiment]

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Figures 1A - 1C best show features of a substrate attracting and holding method according to the present invention, wherein Figure 1A is a plan view of an embodiment of a substrate attracting and holding system arranged in accordance with the substrate attracting and holding method of the present invention, Figure 1B is a plan view of a substrate and it shows an example of disposition of shots or dies on a substrate, and Figure 1C shows an example of patterns of alignment marks.

Denoted in Figure 1A at 1 is a chuck which comprises a substrate attracting and holding system to be mounted on a chuck stage of a semiconductor exposure apparatus, for example. In Figure 1B, denoted at 100 is a substrate such as a wafer to be attracted and held by the chuck 1. Denoted at 101 is a region (shot) of the substrate 100 which region is to be processed by a single operation. Alternatively, it denotes boundaries (scribe lines) for defining each semiconductor chip (die). As regards alignment marks of the substrate 100, alignment marks are already formed at positions as depicted by crosses 10 and triangles 11. Alternatively, alignment marks are going to be produced at these positions. At each position of the cross 10, there is an alignment mark 12 (Figure 1C) which is a mark for position measurement with respect to X direction. At each

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as required. Denoted at 5 are suction holes which are communicated with a vacuum suction unit 8 (Figure 2) for holding a substrate by attraction. These holes are formed to be communicated with suction grooves of the protrusions 2a and 3, respectively. Denoted at 6 are opening bores for adjusting a gas pressure in a space between the chuck 1 and the substrate 100 as attracted and held by the chuck 1. Each of these bores 6 is formed in a zone as divided by the protrusions 2a, that is, in a portion inside a shot of the substrate 100. As shown in Figure 2, these bores 6 are communicated with a pressure adjusting unit 7. Further, the protrusions 2a and 3 of the carrying table for supporting the substrate 100 may preferably be arranged so that the total area contacting the substrate 100 is 10% or less of the area of the substrate surface.

With the structure of the chuck 1 described above, the substrate 100 when placed on the chuck 1 is attracted by suction through the suction holes 5 in response to the operation of the vacuum suction unit 8, whereby it is attracted to and held on the rim type protrusions 2a and 3. Then, by controlling the pressure adjusting unit 7, gas discharging or gas supplying is performed to the space between the chuck 1 and the substrate 100 being attracted and held by the chuck 1, whereby the pressure in that space can be

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adjusted.

As described above, when the substrate 100 is held by vacuum attraction while being aligned with the chuck 1 as in this embodiment, the scribe line 101 portion of the substrate is attracted and secured by the vacuum suction grooves provided at the protrusions 2a, disposed along the scribe lines 101 of the shots of the substrate 100. As a result of it, as shown in Figure 2, a flexure deformation is caused at the surface of the substrate 100. Such deformation of the substrate surface also causes distortion of the substrate along a horizontal plane. Namely, due to such horizontal distortion, in each shot there arise errors in coordinate as a result of deformation of the substrate surface, such as shown in Figure 3, for example. In Figure 3, each dot depicts a position inside a shot on the substrate, and the length of each line represents the magnitude of the coordinate error in the position at that dot. Since these coordinate errors in each shot are determined by the amount of inclination of the substrate surface, the coordinate error is small in a portion where the tilt of the substrate surface is small, near horizontal. In Figure 2, at the scribe line 101 portion as denoted at 21 and at the central portion of a shot as denoted by 22, the coordinate error is small (in Figure 3, the portion corresponding to the scribe line 101 portion

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formed there. Furthermore, by adjusting the gas pressure in the space between the chuck 1 and the substrate 100 through the function of the pressure adjusting unit 7, the region not influenced by the coordinate error as denoted at 22 in Figure 2 can be extended. Thus, the region without being influenced by the coordinate error can be extended as required, such that the region for placement of alignment marks can be enlarged.

The alignment mark 12 shown in Figure 1C is a mark for position detection with respect to X direction. The necessary condition for the location of the mark to avoid the influence of the coordinate error resulting from deformation of the substrate surface, is that the substrate surface has no inclination at least in X direction. Any inclination in Y direction does not affect the position detection in the X direction. Similarly, the alignment mark 13 shown in Figure 1C is a mark for position detection with respect to Y direction. The necessary condition for the location of the mark to avoid the influence of the coordinate error resulting from deformation of the substrate surface, is that the substrate surface has no inclination at least in Y direction. Any inclination in X direction does not affect the position detection with respect to Y direction. In consideration of the above, in this embodiment, a mark

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for position detection in X direction may preferably be provided on a scribe line which is substantially parallel to the X direction, while a mark for position detection in Y direction may preferably be provided on a scribe line which is substantially parallel to Y direction.

As described above, the whole or a portion of the layout of protrusions of the carrying table which are distributed on the carrying surface of the chuck for carrying a substrate, is determined so that a particular positional relationship or a particular shape is defined thereby with respect to the positions of all the alignment marks of the substrate or to the positions where alignment marks are going to be produced. Thus, if, for example, the positions of all the alignment marks of the substrate or the positions where alignment marks are to be produced are set to be placed above the protrusions of the carrying table, then the alignment marks are not influenced by the deformation of the substrate surface, resulting from the attraction and holding of the substrate. Consequently, the coordinate error of the alignment mark resulting from the deformation of the substrate surface can be reduced and, thus, degradation of the substrate processing precision or of the registration precision can be prevented effectively.

[Second Embodiment]

Referring now to Figure 4, another embodiment of a substrate attracting and holding system of the present invention will be described.

5 In this embodiment, as regards the protrusions for supporting a substrate, the rim type protrusions 2a of the embodiment shown in Figure 1A are replaced by pin contact type protrusions 2b and, additionally, the alignment mark forming positions 10 and 11 of the substrate 100 shown in Figure 1B are placed at centers of the disposed protrusions 2b. In Figure 4, scribe lines 101 of the substrate are depicted by broken lines, and crosses and triangles at 10 and 11 correspond to the alignment mark forming positions. Placing each alignment mark at the center of the disposed pin contact type protrusions 2b as 15 illustrated is equivalent to providing an alignment mark at a position 22 in the sectional view of Figure 2 where there is flexure of the substrate. At the central portion of the protrusion layout, the coordinate error is small as the central portion 20 illustrated in Figure 3.

Further, in this embodiment, the support for the processing region of the substrate is all provided 25 by the pin contact type protrusions 2b and, therefore, the contact area between the chuck and the substrate can be made smaller than that in the preceding

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embodiment. This is effective to further reduce the influence of a foreign particle caught between the chuck 1 and a substrate held thereby.

Further, even when changing the alignment mark forming position becomes necessary with the advancement of the procedure of substrate processing, the same advantageous results are attainable in this embodiment by providing another alignment mark at the center of other protrusions 2b. Further, in this embodiment, the location of the substrate surface to be placed just above the pin contact type protrusions 2b is at the position corresponding to the position 21 in Figure 2. It is the position not influenced by the coordinate error attributable to the deformation of the substrate surface caused by the holding of the substrate. Thus, an alignment mark can be provided there.

Further, in the embodiment of Figure 4, there is alignment marks provided on the chuck 1, for bringing the chuck 1 and the substrate 100 into a particular positional relationship. More specifically, in a portion of the chuck 1 not to be covered by a substrate 100 as the same is attracted and held by the chuck, for example, at zones 9, plural sets of alignment marks such as at 12 and 13 in Figure 1C may be provided. Like the preceding embodiment, the substrate 100 may be provided with alignment marks

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12 (Figure 1C) at positions of crosses 10, and alignment marks 13 (Figure 1C) at positions of triangles 11. The positional relation between the chuck 1 and the substrate 100 held by the chuck 1 may be measured by using an alignment scope 108 (see Figure 8) and a chuck stage 107 (Figure 8) of an exposure apparatus, and the positional relation between them may be adjusted by using a driving mechanism (not shown). Thereafter, the substrate 100 may be held fixed. With this procedure, the alignment mark layout on the substrate and the protrusion layout of the chuck can be brought into a particular positional relationship such as, for example, placing each alignment mark of the substrate at the center of the layout of the pin contact type protrusions 2b of the chuck 1. The alignment marks may be those generally used for registration of a projected image of a reticle with a substrate. Since exposure apparatuses are usually equipped with the function of an alignment scope, advantageously there is no necessity of adding a special function to the exposure apparatus.

[Third Embodiment]

Figure 5 shows a substrate attracting and holding system according to another embodiment of the present invention. This embodiment is an example

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wherein the protrusion for supporting a substrate is not provided with a vacuum suction groove. As regards the protrusion, this embodiment uses pin contact type protrusions 2b like those of the embodiment of Figure 4. Further, the suction holes 5 communicated with a vacuum suction unit in the Figure 4 embodiment are formed as opening bores 6 being communicated with a pressure adjusting unit 7. In this embodiment, with this pressure adjusting unit 7, the gas pressure in the space between the chuck 1 and the substrate 100 is adjusted at a negative pressure side, relative to the pressure at the top face of the substrate, whereby a substrate attracting function is provided also with this adjustment. Substantially the same advantageous results as of the embodiment of Figure 2 are attainable with this structure. Further, in the embodiments of Figures 2 and 5, the structure may be modified so that different pressure adjustments are performed to the opening bores 6 opposed to the substrate 100. This meets substrates having a warp as a whole or a large local flexure, for example.

[Fourth Embodiment]

Referring to Figures 6A - 6C, a substrate attracting and holding system according to another embodiment of the present invention will be described.

In the embodiments described above, the

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alignment mark forming position is placed inside the shot layout (an array of plural processing regions) such as upon a scribe line of a substrate or at a central portion of a shot on the substrate. This embodiment concerns an example wherein alignment marks of a substrate are provided outside the shot layout and wherein the coordinate error of the alignment mark can be reduced without being influenced by deformation such as a flexure of the substrate surface caused by the substrate holding and attraction.

Figure 6A is a plan view of a chuck according to this embodiment, and Figure 6B is a plan view of a substrate to be attracted and held by the chuck. Figure 6C shows the relationship between substrate supporting protrusions of the chuck and alignment mark forming positions on the substrate.

In the substrate 100 to be attracted to and held by the chuck 1 of this embodiment, as shown in Figure 6B, there are X-direction position measuring alignment marks 10 (depicted by crosses) and Y-direction position measuring alignment marks 11 (depicted by triangles) which are provided outside the shot layout (an array of plural processing regions as divided by scribe lines 101).

The chuck 1 of this embodiment has, as shown in Figure 6A, substrate supporting protrusions of a carrying table which comprise a number of pin contact

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type protrusions 2b disposed in a grid-like array inside the region corresponding to the shot layout of the substrate, as well as a ring-like rim type protrusion 3 including a rim-like protrusion formed at an outer peripheral portion of the chuck 1 and a vacuum suction groove. Further, there are a number of pin contact type protrusions 2b(o) which are arrayed in an oblong shape at plural locations (eight locations in the drawing) inside a region 4 between the ring-like protrusion 3 at the outer peripheral portion and the pin contact type protrusions 2b (i.e., the region outside the shot layout of the substrate). Additionally, there are suction holes 5 being communicated with a vacuum suction unit for attraction of a substrate, which holes are provided in the vacuum suction groove of the rim type protrusion 3 and also in the region 4 between the ring-like protrusion 3 at the outer peripheral portion and the protrusions 2b. The pin contact type protrusions 2b(o) arrayed in an oblong shape are disposed to surround the alignment mark forming positions 10 and 11 on the substrate 100, as illustrated. Additionally, these protrusions are placed in such positional relationship that the alignment mark forming positions 10 and 11 of the substrate is set at a location where there occurs no coordinate error as a result of deformation of the surface of the substrate as the same is attracted, for

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example, at a position equivalent to the position 22 shown in Figure 2, not being influenced by the coordinate error. Also, the pin contact type protrusions 2b arrayed in a grid are disposed with a spacing (pitch) corresponding to 1/10 of the spacing (pitch) of the shots on the substrate 100.

With the structure of this embodiment as described above, even in a case where alignment marks of the substrate are formed outside the shot layout, when the substrate 100 is attracted and held by the chuck 1, the portion surrounding the alignment mark forming positions 10 and 11 of the substrate is supported by the pin contact type protrusions 2b(o) arrayed in an oblong shape. Further, the alignment mark forming positions 10 and 11 are placed in such positional relationship with the pin contact type protrusions 2b(o) of oblong shape array that they are located at a place where no coordinate error occurs. Therefore, the influence of deformation of the substrate surface such as warp caused by attraction and holding of the substrate can be avoided. The coordinate error of the alignment mark can be reduced, and degradation of the substrate processing precision or registration precision can be prevented.

As long as the alignment mark forming position on the substrate is placed at a location equivalent to the position 22 in Figure 2 relatively

to the substrate supporting protrusions as the substrate is attracted and held thereby, the substrate supporting protrusions are not limited to the pin contact type protrusion and they may be provided by a rim type protrusion or protrusions. Further, the shape of the array of the substrate supporting protrusions surrounding the alignment mark forming position is not limited to an oblong shape. It may have a triangular shape, a polygonal shape or an elliptical shape. Further, a substrate supporting protrusion may be provided at a portion corresponding to the alignment mark forming position outside the shot layout of the substrate, so that the alignment mark forming position of the substrate is supported by this supporting protrusion. This enables that the alignment mark forming position is supported substantially horizontally, like the position 21 shown in Figure 2, thereby to remove the coordinate error of the alignment mark. In that occasion, similarly, degradation of the substrate processing precision and registration precision can be prevented.

[Fifth Embodiment]

Referring to Figures 7A - 7C, a substrate attracting and holding system according to another embodiment of the present invention will be described.

This embodiment is a modified form of the

embodiment shown in Figures 6A - 6C. Like the preceding embodiment, when alignment marks of a substrate are formed outside the shot layout, this embodiment enables reduction of a coordinate error of the alignment mark without being influenced by deformation of the substrate surface such as flexure caused by attraction and holding of the substrate.

Figure 7A is a plan view of a chuck of this embodiment, and Figure 7B shows the relationship between substrate supporting protrusions of the chuck and alignment mark forming positions on a substrate. Figure 7C is a fragmentary perspective view in which a portion around an alignment mark forming position of a substrate as the same is attracted and held on the chuck is illustrated in a section.

The substrate 100 to be attracted and held by the chuck 1 of this embodiment is similar to that shown in Figure 6B, and there are alignment mark forming positions 10 (depicted by crosses) and alignment mark forming positions 11 (depicted by triangles) which are disposed outside the shot layout. The chuck 1 of this embodiment has, as shown in Figure 7A, substrate supporting protrusions of a carrying table which comprise a number of pin contact type protrusions 2b disposed in a grid-like array inside the region corresponding to the shot layout of the substrate, as well as a ring-like rim type protrusion

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3 including a rim-like protrusion formed at an outer peripheral portion of the chuck 1 and a vacuum suction groove. Further, there are a number of pin contact type protrusions 2c(o) which are arrayed in an oblong shape at plural locations (eight locations in the drawing) inside a region 4 between the ring-like protrusion 3 at the outer peripheral portion and the pin contact type protrusions 2b (i.e., the region outside the shot layout of the substrate).

5

10 Additionally, there are suction holes 5 being communicated with a vacuum suction unit for attraction of a substrate, which holes are provided in the vacuum suction groove of the rim type protrusion 3 and also in the region 4 between the ring-like protrusion 3 at the outer peripheral portion and the protrusions 2b.

15

Also, there are opening bores 6 in the zones as defined by the rim-like protrusions 2c(o) disposed in an oblong shape, which bores are communicated with a pressure adjusting unit 7 (Figure 7C). This pressure

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adjusting unit 7 serves to perform gas discharging or gas suction to the space between the chuck 1 and the substrate 100 as the substrate is held by the chuck, to thereby adjust the gas pressure in that space. The pin contact type protrusions 2c(o) arrayed in an

25

oblong shape are disposed to surround a portion corresponding to the alignment mark forming positions 10 and 11 on the substrate 100, like the embodiment of

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Figures 6A - 6C. Additionally, these protrusions are placed in such positional relationship that the alignment mark forming positions 10 and 11 of the substrate are set at a location where there occurs no coordinate error as a result of deformation of the surface of the substrate as the same is attracted, for example, at a position equivalent to the position 22 shown in Figure 2, not being influenced by the coordinate error.

With the structure of this embodiment as described above, in addition to the advantageous effects as attainable with the embodiment of Figures 6A - 6C, the gas pressure inside the space between the chuck 1 and the substrate 100 at the zone as separated by the rim-like protrusions 2c(o) can be adjusted by gas discharging or gas suction made to that space by means of the pressure adjusting unit 7. This enables adjustment of the amount of flexure of the substrate 100 in that region, as the same is supported by the rim-like protrusions 2c(o) when the substrate is attracted and held. Thus, it enables appropriate adjustment of the surface deformation of the substrate 100 at the alignment mark forming positions or of a portion around them, thereby to perform flatness correction of the substrate surface. This extends the region of the substrate surface not influenced by the deformation such as flexure, for example, to be caused

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by attraction and holding of the substrate, and thus enlargement of the region where an alignment mark can be formed.

In accordance with this embodiment, as described, the alignment mark forming positions 10 and 11 of the substrate are not influenced by deformation such as flexure of the substrate surface due to the attraction and holding of the substrate, such that the coordinate error of the alignment mark can be avoided positively. Further, the substrate in the zone as divided by the rim-like protrusions 2c(o) can be held substantially horizontally and, therefore, the range for forming an alignment mark can be enlarged. Thus, also with this embodiment, degradation of the substrate processing precision or registration precision can be prevented.

In the embodiments as described above, the position of an alignment mark or the position where an alignment mark is to be formed and a protrusion layout adjacent to that position are placed in a particular positional relationship with each other. More specifically, the positions of alignment marks of the substrate or the positions where alignment marks are going to be produced are set at such location less influenced by deformation of the substrate surface resulting from the attraction and holding of the substrate. This effectively reduces the coordinate

error of the alignment mark resulting from the deformation of the substrate surface.

As regards the alignment mark position or the alignment mark forming position, when the position of an alignment mark of a substrate or the position where an alignment mark is to be produced and the layout of substrate supporting protrusions adjacent to it is placed in a particular positional relationship, it is possible to predict deformation of the substrate surface due to the attraction and holding of the substrate. Therefore, it is possible to predict and estimate the coordinate error of the alignment mark to be caused by the deformation of the substrate surface. Thus, when the alignment mark is measured, correction may be made to the measurement result to correct the coordinate error of the alignment mark due to deformation of the substrate, as calculated beforehand. This accomplished further reduction of the adverse influence.

Even if the alignment mark position or the alignment mark forming position can not be set exactly at the location as described in the preceding embodiments, an exposure apparatus such as shown in Figure 8, for example, may be used to calculate the coordinate error of the alignment mark on the basis of the combination of the disposition of the alignment mark on the substrate or the alignment mark forming

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5 adjustment or distortion adjustment of a projection
optical system may be made. This enables optimum
superposition of a projected image of a reticle with a
pattern on the substrate.

[Sixth Embodiment]

Denoted in Figure 8 at 103 is a reticle or mask (hereinafter, "reticle") which is an original having formed thereon a pattern to be transferred by exposure to a substrate 100 such as a wafer, for example. The reticle 103 is held by a reticle stage 106. Denoted at 107 is a chuck stage which is movable along a horizontal plane (X-Y plane) while carrying a chuck 1 thereon. Denoted at 108 is an alignment scope

for measuring the positional relationship between the exposure apparatus and the substrate or between the substrate and the chuck. Denoted at 111 is a projection optical system having a function for
5 adjusting magnification or distortion of a projection lens. Denoted at 112 is a control unit for calculating or calibrating a coordinate error of an alignment mark due to distortion of the substrate surface, with respect to the result of detection of
10 the alignment mark, and for specifying the adjustment of the projection optical system 111.

Exposure light passing through the reticle 103 is reduced in scale by the projection optical system 111, and it is projected on a substrate 100
15 being attracted and held by the chuck 1. The substrate 100 is coated beforehand with a small thickness resist material which is a photosensitive material adapted to effectively cause a chemical reaction in response to irradiation with the exposure
20 light. It functions as an etching mask in a subsequent process.

With the structure of the exposure apparatus as described above, an error in the coordinate of an alignment mark to be produced by deformation of the
25 substrate surface attributable to the attraction and holding of the substrate can be calculated once the combination of the alignment mark forming position

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inside the substrate and the disposition of the protrusions of the chuck is determined. Therefore, even if the alignment mark position can not be set exactly at the location as described with reference to the preceding embodiments, the coordinate error of the alignment mark can be calculated by the control unit 12 on the basis of the combination of the alignment mark disposition on the substrate and the disposition of the substrate supporting protrusions of the chuck. By taking the result of calculation into account in respect to the result of detection of the alignment mark through the alignment scope 108, the magnification or distortion of the projection optical system 111 can be adjusted to assure optimum superposition of a projected image of the reticle 103 with the pattern of the substrate 100.

A tolerance of alignment for an alignment mark of a substrate with the disposition of protrusions of a chuck for supporting the substrate can be estimated by approximation using a model such as follows. Figure 9A shows flexure of a substrate as attracted to and held by protrusions. Figure 9B shows a model of a beam having both ends fixed, which receives an even distributed load. Figure 9C is a view for explaining the relation between the substrate surface and a neutral plane not deformed by the flexure of the substrate.

Where the spacing between protrusions 2 for supporting the substrate is 1, the flexure of the substrate is such as shown in Figure 9A. In this case, as regards a material dynamic model, a model of a beam having both ends fixed and receiving an even distributed load such as shown in Figure 9B applies. According to "Mechanical Engineering Handbook", edited by Japanese Mechanical Engineering Association, Maruzen Co., if a load per a unit length as determined by a vacuum pressure p or the like is w, a sectional secondary moment is I, the spacing between the protrusions is 1, and a longitudinal elasticity coefficient is E, then the flexure v of the substrate at a position x with respect to a direction from a protrusion end as an origin to a juxtaposed protrusion as well as the inclination i of the substrate are expressed as follows:

$$v = (wl^4/24EI)[x^2/l^2 - 2x^3/l^3 + x^4/l^4] \quad \dots(1.1)$$

$$i = (wl^3/12EI)[x/l - 3x^2/l^2 + 2x^3/l^3] \quad \dots(1.2)$$

Here, when a thickness h of the substrate and a width b thereof shown in Figure 9B are used, it follows that there are relations such as follows:

$$I = bh^3/12 \quad \dots(1.3)$$

$$w = pb \quad \dots(1.4)$$

In Figure 9C, a dash-and-dot line passing about the center of the thickness h depicts a neutral plane which is not elongated or contracted in X direction.

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at any x position thereof. With respect to this neutral plane, depending on the location there occurs an elongation/contraction in X direction of the substrate surface. Since the distance from the neutral plane to the substrate surface is influenced by the processing state of the substrate or the attraction state thereof, taking k as a neutral plane correction coefficient, the coordinate error d of the substrate surface can be expressed as follows:

$$d = k(h_i/2) = k(hw l^3/24EI)[x/l - 3x^2/l^2 + 2x^3/l^3] \quad \dots(1.5)$$

From this, it follows that:

$$d = f(x) = k(pl^3/2h^2E)[x/l - 3x^2/l^2 + 2x^3/l^3] \quad \dots(1.6)$$

The tolerance for the alignment error (i.e., the difference between the value x in an idealistic state and the value x_a being shifted practically) between the disposition of the alignment mark of the substrate and the disposition of the protrusion of the chuck, if a tolerance for the coordinate error not adversely influential to the alignment is set, can be detected from equation (1.6) above, since the values p , h , E and I are known as determined by the apparatus or the substrate to be used in practice. If the tolerance for the coordinate error is denoted by d_c , then the alignment error tolerance x_c can be determined to satisfy equation (1.7) below:

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$$d_c \geq f(x_c) - f(x_0) \quad \dots(1.7)$$

Practically, while the two-dimensional disposition of the protrusions is taken into account, equation (1.6) as the same is advanced may be used, with a result of a higher accuracy.

Referring to Figure 10, a mechanism for changing substrates and chucks in accordance with the present invention will now be described.

In the present invention, when the disposition of the alignment mark of the substrate is changed and, as a result, the predetermined positional relation with the disposition of the protrusions of the chuck is changed, the chuck has to be replaced by another. Figure 10 shows a mechanism for changing chucks without decreasing the throughput.

In Figure 10, denoted at 116 is a chuck cassette for accommodating therein plural chucks 1a, 1b, ..., each having protrusions disposed in accordance with the processing shape for substrates. Denoted at 117 is a conveyance robot for unloading a desired chuck from the chuck cassette 116 and for conveying the same onto a chuck stage 107 on which an exposure process or the like is to be performed. Denoted at 123 is a substrate cassette for accommodating therein plural substrates to be processed. Denoted at 124 is another conveyance robot for unloading each substrate 100 from the substrate

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cassette 123 and for conveying the same onto a prealignment stage 125. Denoted at 127 is a conveyance robot for moving a substrate, having been prealigned by the prealignment stage 125 onto the chuck 1 already mounted on the X-Y stage 107.

With the structure of the mechanism described above, a substrate 100 to be processed is taken out of the substrate cassette 123 by the conveyance robot 124. Generally, it is placed on the prealignment stage 125 having an outer peripheral shape detecting sensor 126 for the substrate, and a rough alignment operation of the same with respect to a projected image in an exposure apparatus is performed there. During this prealignment operation, the chuck is replaced by a necessary chuck 1 by means of the chuck conveyance robot 117 and between the chuck stage 107 and the chuck cassette 116. This enables use of a chuck suited to the substrate, without a large decrease of the throughput.

It is to be noted here that the substrate attracting and holding method and the substrate attracting and holding system of the present invention are not limited to use in an exposure apparatus. They may of course be used in a liquid crystal substrate manufacturing apparatus, a magnetic head manufacturing apparatus, various inspection machines for a semiconductor, or the manufacture of micro-machines,

for example.

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5 In accordance with the present invention as described hereinbefore, the position of an alignment mark of a substrate or the position where an alignment mark is going to be formed can be set at a specific location in relation to flexure of a substrate to be attracted and held, to thereby avoid an adverse influence of a coordinate error of the alignment error due to flexure of the substrate surface. Further, the

10 coordinate error of the alignment mark can be calculated beforehand from the positional relationship between the alignment mark and the disposition of an protrusion for supporting the substrate adjacent there. On the basis of the result of calculation, the

15 coordinate error of the alignment mark can be corrected.

Thus, in an exposure apparatus, degradation of the pattern overlay precision due to the influence of surface flexure, for example, of the substrate

20 caused by the attraction and holding of the same, can be avoided, and production of a defect of a semiconductor device resulting from the shape of the substrate surface can be prevented.

25 [Seventh Embodiment]

Next, a substrate attracting and holding system according to another embodiment of the present

invention will be described.

Figures 11A and 11B show an embodiment of a substrate attracting and holding system according to the present invention, wherein Figure 11A is a plan view and Figure 11B is a fragmentary sectional view thereof. Figure 12 is a plane showing a further embodiment of a substrate attracting and holding system of the present invention.

In Figures 11A and 11B, denoted at 301 is a chuck (substrate attracting and holding system) to be mounted on an X-Y stage of a semiconductor exposure apparatus, for example. The chuck has a supporting surface on which a substrate such as a wafer is to be placed, and the supporting surface is provided by a plurality of pin-like protrusions 310, 313 and 314 (which will hereinafter be referred to also as a "pin") for supporting a substrate. The free top end of each protrusion is finished into a super flat face by a high-precision lapping process.

The pin-like protrusions 310 shown in Figures 11A and 11B have a pin diameter of 0.2 mm, and they are juxtaposed in a grid-like array with a disposition pitch of L mm. There is at least one suction hole 311 for vacuum attraction, at the top face of the chuck, which is communicated with a vacuum source. In place of the grid-like disposition of the pin-like protrusions 310, they may be arrayed concentrically as

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shown in Figure 12. They may be disposed in a 60-deg. staggering array, or they may be disposed at random with a pin pitch of L mm or less. An array based on combination of those described above may be used.

5 At the outer peripheral portion of the chuck
1, there are a plurality of pin-like (outer
peripheral) protrusions 313 disposed in a
circumferential shape, for supporting the outer
peripheral portion of a substrate. Also, there is a
10 ring-like partition wall 312 just inside the outer
peripheral protrusions 313. The ring-like partition
wall 312 has a height which is lower than the top face
of the protrusions 313 by about 1 to 2 microns. This
is because, with a gap of about 1 - 2 microns, a
15 decrease of vacuum pressure for attraction is so small
that it causes no problem. On the other hand, even if
a dust particle of a diameter smaller than the
difference of 1 - 2 microns is adhered to the
partition wall 312, it does not contact the substrate.
20 Thus, it does not cause an increase of the contract
rate. In Figures 11A and 11B, denoted at 314 are
protrusions disposed along a circumference inside the
outermost protrusions 313 by one pitch, and they are
disposed in juxtaposition to the inside face of the
25 ring-like partition wall 312.

With the structure of the chuck 1 described
above, the substrate 302 such as a wafer is placed on

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the supporting surface of the chuck and, through vacuum suction applied in response to the operation of the vacuum source via the suction holes 311, the substrate 302 is supported on the chuck and attracted and held by the protrusions 310, 313 and 314 as shown in Figures 13 or 19. Here, between the protrusions, the wafer (substrate) 2 is deformed and flexed by the vacuum attraction force, and the flatness of the wafer is degraded. Also, due to the flexure of the wafer, the wafer surface is distorted in horizontal directions to cause a positional deviation and thus a wafer distortion.

Now, the wafer flatness and the amount of wafer distortion will be considered, using a material dynamics model.

Figure 13 is a sectional view showing the flexure at the portion of a wafer 302 where, in the central portion of the chuck 301, there are pin-like protrusions 310 juxtaposed continuously along one direction with a pin pitch L , when the wafer is attracted and held thereby. In this example, as regards a material dynamics model, a model of a beam having its opposite ends fixed and receiving an even distributed load, as shown in Figure 14, applies.

Here, if the width of the beam is b , the thickness thereof is h , and the sectional secondary moment is I , it follows that:

$$I = (b \cdot h^3)/12 \quad \dots(2.1)$$

If the vacuum pressure is p and the load per a unit length is w , it follows that:

$$w = p \cdot b \quad \dots(2.2)$$

- 5 Where the length of the beam is L and the longitudinal elasticity coefficient is E , the maximum flexure amount v of the beam is given by:

$$v = (w \cdot L^4)/(384 \cdot E \cdot I) \quad \dots(2.3)$$

By modifying equation (2.3) by using equations (2.1)

- 10 and (2.2), it follows that:

$$v = (P \cdot L^4)/(32 \cdot E \cdot h^3) \quad \dots(2.4)$$

Namely, this means that the largest flexure amount v of the beam is not dependent upon the width b but, rather, it is determined by the vacuum pressure p , the beam length L , the longitudinal elasticity coefficient E and the thickness h . Then, the largest flexure amount v corresponds to the wafer flatness.

- 15 Next, where the coordinate of the beam in its lengthwise direction is x and the bending moment is M , it follow that:

$$M = (w \cdot L^2/2)[-1/6 + x/L - x^2/L^2] \quad \dots(2.5)$$

Figure 15 shows the relation (curve 15) between the coordinate x and the moment M as well as the flexure curve (curve 16) of the beam. As seen also from

- 25 Figure 15, the moment M is negative in ranges a and c of the coordinate x , whereas it is positive in a range b . Also, at two positions x_1 and x_2 where M becomes

equal to zero, the tilt angle of the beam flexure curve becomes largest. Where this largest tilt angle is denoted by α , it follows that:

$$\alpha = (\sqrt{3}w \cdot L^3)/(216 \cdot E \cdot I) \quad \dots(2.6)$$

5 When this is modified by using equations (2.1) and (2.2), it follows that:

$$\alpha = (\sqrt{3} \cdot P \cdot L^3)/(18 \cdot E \cdot h^3) \quad \dots(2.7)$$

Since in practice a wafer has a thickness h , if it is illustrated with exaggeration, the result is such as shown in Figure 16. In Figure 16, a dash-and-dot line 17 passing through the middle of the thickness h depicts a neutral plane at any position on which there occurs no elongation or contraction. At a side of the neutral plane facing the wafer surface, 10 due to the bending moment M , there occurs an elongation, by tension, in X direction within the ranges a and c of the coordinates x . In the range b , there occurs a contraction in X direction, by compression. On the other hand, at a side of the 15 neutral plane facing the wafer bottom surface, there occurs a contraction, by compression, in the ranges a and c of the coordinate x , while there occurs an elongation in X direction, by tension, in the range b . The amount of elongation or contraction in the X 20 direction is proportional to the distance from the neutral plane and also, it is proportional to the tilt angle of the neutral plane. Namely, a positional

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deviation to be produced by the elongation/contraction of the wafer surface in the X direction resulting from the attraction, becomes equal to zero at the positions x3, x5 and x7 where the tilt angle is zero, whereas it becomes largest at the positions x4 and x6 where the tilt angle is maximum. As regards the distance from the neutral plane to the wafer surface, in a case of a monocrystal Si wafer, it may be approximately equal to h/2. However, it may differ from h/2, depending on the material or uniformness of the wafer or the substrate, the process or processes having been applied to the surface or bottom surface, the state of attraction to the chuck, for example. Thus, by taking it as k·h/2 wherein k is the neutral plane correction coefficient and if the largest positional deviation is denoted by u, it follows that:

$$u = [(h \cdot \alpha) / 2] \cdot k \quad \dots (2.8)$$

When this is modified by using equation (2.7), it follows that:

$$u = [(\sqrt{3} \cdot P \cdot L^3) / (36 \cdot E \cdot h^2)] \cdot k \quad \dots (2.9)$$

Namely, this means that the largest positional deviation amount u on the wafer surface is not dependent upon the width b but, rather, it is determined by the neutral plane correction coefficient k, the vacuum pressure p, the beam length L, the longitudinal elasticity coefficient E and the thickness h. Since the exposure process is performed

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in this state, the image to be printed on the wafer is an image being distorted relatively to the wafer by an amount corresponding to the positional deviation.

Therefore, the largest positional deviation u corresponds to the wafer distortion.

While the explanation above has been made to a one-dimensional beam model in respect to the portion where the pin-like protrusions 310 are juxtaposed continuously along one direction with a pin pitch L , practically the pin array comprises a two-dimensional array. Depending on the disposition used, such as grid-like disposition, circumferential disposition, 60-deg. staggering disposition, random disposition or the like, the values of the largest flexure amount v and the largest positional deviation u are variable. In consideration of it, where the wafer flatness as a flat wafer is attracted in practice is V_1 , the wafer distortion is U_1 and the correction coefficients depending on the pin disposition are c_1 and c_2 , it follows that:

$$V_1 = v \cdot c_1 = [(P \cdot L^4)/(32 \cdot E \cdot h^3)] \cdot c_1 \quad \dots (2.10)$$

$$U_1 = u \cdot c_2 = [(\sqrt{3} \cdot P \cdot L^3)/(36 \cdot E \cdot h^2)] \cdot k \cdot c_2 \quad \dots (2.11)$$

In the case of grid-like disposition, as shown in Figure 17, since the largest flexure occurs at the position of the center 318 of four pins 319 - 323, it can be regarded that the flexure becomes larger than that of a case where a beam 323 supported

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by the pins 319 and 323 is considered and the flexure is calculated while taking the length as L , and also that it becomes smaller than that of a case where a beam 324 as supported by diagonal protrusions 319 and 321, of the four pins, is considered and the flexure is calculated while taking the length as $L \cdot 2^{1/2}$. Therefore, it can be regarded that the correction coefficient c_1 becomes equal to 1 to 4 ($= (2^{1/2})^4$) while the correction coefficient c_2 becomes equal to 1 to 2.8 ($= (2^{1/2})^3$). Since however the beam 324 supported by the diagonal pins 319 and 321 and the beam 325 supported by the diagonal pins 320 and 322 may be flexed independently, by the same amount, the value may be close to that as determined while taking the beam length as $L \cdot 2^{1/2}$.

On the other hand, in the case of 60-deg. staggering disposition, as shown in Figure 18, the largest flexure occurs at the position of the center 326 of three pins. Therefore, it can be regarded that the flexure becomes larger than that of a case where a beam 331 supported by the pins 327 and 331 is considered and the flexure is calculated while taking the length as L , and also that it becomes smaller than that of a case where a beam 333 passing through the center 326 of the three pins and being supported by pins 327 and 328 is considered and the flexure is calculated while taking the length as $L \cdot 2/3^{1/2}$.

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Therefore, it can be regarded that the correction coefficient c_1 becomes equal to 1 to 1.8 ($= (2/3^{1/2})^4$), while the correction coefficient c_2 becomes equal to 1 to 1.5 ($= (2/3^{1/2})^3$).

Further, in the case of circumferential disposition or random disposition, it may be considered as a modification of the grid-like disposition or the 60-deg. staggering disposition. Depending on the degree of modification, the values of the correction coefficients are changed. However, with a small modification, it can be regarded substantially the same as the grid-like disposition or the 60-deg. staggering disposition. The correction coefficients may be of the same values.

In practice, the correction coefficients c_1 and c_2 may be calculated on the basis of FEM, for each of different poi dispositions, by which they can be determined more accurately. Further, the correction coefficient c_1 or $k \cdot c_2$ may be evaluated on the basis of experiments, by which it can be determined more accurately.

Since the wafer flatness V_1 and the wafer distortion U_1 as a flat wafer is attracted in practice are expressed by equations (2.10) and (2.11), if a wafer flatness tolerance as being tolerable in a chuck is dz and similarly the wafer distortion tolerance is $dx dy$, it follows that:

$$dz \geq [(P \cdot L^4)/(32 \cdot E \cdot h^3)] \cdot c_1 \quad \dots(2.12)$$

$$dxdy \geq [(\sqrt{3} \cdot P \cdot L^3)/(36 \cdot E \cdot h^2)] \cdot k \cdot c_2 \quad \dots(2.13)$$

Here, once a wafer (substrate) to be attracted is determined, then the longitudinal elasticity

5 coefficient E, the thickness h and the neutral plane correction coefficient k are determined. If the pin (protrusion) disposition is fixed, the correction coefficients c_1 and c_2 based on the pin disposition are determined. Therefore, a suitable combination of
10 a vacuum pressure P and a pin pitch L, satisfying the conditions of equations (2.12) and (2.13), can be selected.

Namely, when equations (2.12) and (2.13) are modified, it follows that:

$$15 \quad P \leq [(32 \cdot E \cdot h^3 \cdot dz)/c_1] \cdot (1/L^4) \quad \dots(2.14)$$

$$P \leq [(36 \cdot E \cdot h^2 \cdot dxdy)/(\sqrt{3} \cdot k \cdot c_2)] \cdot (1/L^3) \quad \dots(2.15)$$

Thus, by arranging the chuck with a vacuum pressure P and a pin pitch L, satisfying both of equations (2.14) and (2.15), the wafer flatness and the distortion can
20 be made smaller than the tolerances dz and dxdy, respectively.

On the other hand, as regards these two conditions, if the pin pitch L is not greater than a certain value and as long as the condition of equation
25 (2.15) is satisfied, the condition of equation (2.14) is also satisfied. This value for the pitch L can be determined under a condition that the right side of

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equation (2.15) is smaller than the right side of equation (2.14), and it is given as follows:

$$L \leq [(8 \cdot \sqrt{3} \cdot k \cdot c_2) / (9 \cdot c_1)] \cdot [(h \cdot dz) / dx dy] \quad \dots (2.16)$$

Namely, within the range in which the pin pitch L satisfies equation (2.16), a chuck with a vacuum pressure P and a pin pitch L satisfying equation (2.15) may be used.

Thus, now a case wherein a typical Si wafer of a diameter 200 mm is attracted and held by a pin chuck having a grid-like pin disposition is considered. It is taken that the longitudinal elasticity coefficient $E = 1.69 \times 10^{11}$ N/m, the thickness $h = 0.725$ mm, the neutral plane correction coefficient $k = 1$, the correction coefficients $c_1 = 4$ and $c_2 = 2.8$. Also, in a semiconductor process of 0.25 micron rule, currently being mass-produced, the wafer flatness tolerance dz is 80 nm, when taken as 10% of the depth of focus 800 nm. The wafer distortion tolerance $dx dy$ is 5 nm, when taken as 10% of the overlay precision 50 nm. Then, while taking the unit of pressure P is N/m^2 and the unit of pitch L is m, from equations (2.15) and (2.16), it follows that:

$$P \leq 0.0033/L^3 \quad \dots (2.17)$$

$$L \leq 0.0125 \quad \dots (2.18)$$

It is seen that, when the pin pitch L is not greater than 12.5 mm, a vacuum pressure P and a pin pitch L

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satisfying equation (2.17) may be used. Since, generally, the pin pitch L is not greater than 5 mm, to be described later, it applies to that.

Here, it should be noted that, in the normal pin pitch, satisfaction of only equation (2.15) is accompanied by satisfaction of equation (2.14) means that there is a more strict condition involved in reducing the wafer distortion to a tolerance or smaller, as compared with improving the wafer flatness. In order to clarify this, the ratio of the wafer flatness V_1 and the wafer distortion U_1 may be detected from equations (2.10) and (2.11). It follows that:

$$V_1/U_1 = [(9 \cdot c_1)/(8 \cdot \sqrt{3} \cdot k \cdot c_2)] \cdot (L/h) \quad \dots(2.19)$$

By substituting typical coefficients similar to those described above, into this equation, it follows that:

$$V_1/U_1 = 1280 \cdot L \quad \dots(2.20)$$

This means that, if the pin pitch L is 2 mm, for example, there occurs a wafer distortion U_1 corresponding to 1/2.6 of the wafer flatness V_1 . Namely, it means that, if the tolerance for the wafer distortion is 5 nm, only a wafer flatness of 13 nm is allowed. This value is extraordinarily strict as compared with the wafer flatness tolerance of 80 nm, determined by the depth of focus. Also, if the pin pitch L is large, the rate of wafer distortion production relative to the wafer flatness becomes

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small. It can not reach the rate of wafer distortion tolerance relative to the wafer flatness tolerance, unless a pin pitch L is set to 12.5 mm.

Next, referring to Figure 25, the range of practical values for the vacuum pressure P and the pin pitch L will be described. Figure 25 is a graph wherein the pin pitch L is taken on the axis of abscissa, and the vacuum pressure P is taken on the axis of ordinate. The range for the vacuum pressure P and the pin pitch L satisfying equation (2.17) is at the lower left zone of a solid line 342.

Although equation (2.17) has been determined with reference to a Si wafer of a diameter 200 mm, having a thickness $h = 0.725$ mm, a Si wafer of a diameter 125 mm may have a thickness $h = 0.725$ mm and, in that occasion, it follows that:

$$P \leq 0.00245/L^3 \quad \dots(2.21)$$

Thus, in Figure 25, the range corresponds to a lower left zone below a solid line 343.

Further, for a Si wafer of 300 mm diameter, the thickness is $h = 0.775$ mm. Also, it is expected that wafers of a larger diameter such as 400 mm Si wafers are used in future. The thickness will be come $h =$ about 0.825 mm. In consideration of this, the value is calculated with a thickness $h = 0.825$ mm.

Then, it follows that:

$$P \leq 0.00427/L^3 \quad \dots(2.22)$$

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In Figure 25, it corresponds to a lower left zone below a solid line 341.

Further, with further miniaturization of a semiconductor device, the semiconductor process will change to 0.18 micron rule, 0.13 micron rule or to 0.1 micron rule. With these changes, improvements in the overlay precision are absolutely required. Thus, it is expected that the tolerance for wafer distortion is changed to a much strict value, such as from 5 nm to 2.5 nm and to 1 nm.

In consideration of the above, the value is calculated on the basis of a wafer distortion tolerance $dx dy = 2.5$ nm and a thickness $h = 0.825$ mm. It follows that:

$$P \leq 0.00213/L^3 \quad \dots(2.23)$$

In Figure 25, it corresponds to a lower left zone below a solid line 344.

Similarly, when the value is calculated with a wafer distortion tolerance $dx dy = 2.5$ nm and a thickness $h = 0.725$ mm, it follows that:

$$P \leq 0.00165/L^3 \quad \dots(2.24)$$

In Figure 25, it corresponds to a lower left zone below a solid line 345.

Similarly, when the value is calculated with a wafer distortion tolerance $dx dy = 2.5$ nm and a thickness $h = 0.625$ mm, it follows that:

$$P \leq 0.00123/L^3 \quad \dots(2.25)$$

In Figure 25, it corresponds to a lower left zone below a solid line 346.

Further, when the value is calculated with a wafer distortion tolerance $dx dy = 1$ nm and a thickness $h = 0.825$ mm, it follows that:

$$P \leq 0.00085/L^3 \quad \dots(2.26)$$

In Figure 25, it corresponds to a lower left zone below a solid line 347.

Similarly, when the value is calculated with a wafer distortion tolerance $dx dy = 1$ nm and a thickness $h = 0.725$ mm, it follows that:

$$P \leq 0.00066/L^3 \quad \dots(2.27)$$

In Figure 25, it corresponds to a lower left zone below a solid line 348.

Similarly, when the value is calculated with a wafer distortion tolerance $dx dy = 1$ nm and a thickness $h = 0.625$ mm, it follows that:

$$P \leq 0.00049/L^3 \quad \dots(2.28)$$

In Figure 25, it corresponds to a lower left zone below a solid line 349.

As described above, the practical range for the vacuum pressure P and the pin pitch L at the wafer central portion has been considered in accordance with equation (2.15) and in respect to various values of the wafer thickness h and the wafer distortion tolerance $dx dy$. In these examples, since the range of the pin pitch L as determined by equation (2.16)

satisfies a standard pin pitch (not greater than 5 mm) to be described later, the condition of equation (2.14) is also satisfied. This is because, even in a case where the right side of equation (2.16) becomes smallest, that is, even in the case of a smallest thickness $h = 0.625$ mm and a largest $dx dy = 5$ nm, a relation $L \leq 0.011$ is given such that the standard pin pitch 5 mm to be described later is satisfied.

Therefore, by arranging the chuck with a vacuum pressure P and a pin pitch L , at the wafer central portion, which are selected out of the range described above, a desired wafer flatness tolerance dz and a desired wafer distortion tolerance $dx dy$ can be satisfied.

The ordinary range for the vacuum pressure P of the chuck will be, under different conditions of the chuck, as follows. First, the smallest vacuum pressure which can be used in practice, is determined by the condition for holding a wafer even if an X-Y stage for holding the chuck moves at a largest acceleration. Namely, if the largest acceleration of the X-Y stage is G , the stationary friction coefficient is μ , the wafer area of (s), the wafer density is ρ , then it follows that:

$$P \cdot (s) \cdot \mu \geq G \cdot (s) \cdot h \cdot \rho \quad \dots (2.29)$$

Namely, it follows that:

$$P \geq G \cdot h \cdot \rho / \mu \quad \dots (2.30)$$

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$$5 \quad P \geq 33 \quad \dots (2.31)$$

Next, the largest vacuum pressure P which can be used in practice is, if the atmospheric pressure is 100 kN/m², as follows:

In Figure 25, it corresponds to a lower zone below a solid line 351.

$$n = 1/L^2 \quad \dots (2.33)$$

Further, in the case of the 60-deg. staggering disposition shown in Figure 18, there is one pin in

the area as enclosed by four pins 327 - 330, it follows that:

$$n (2/3^{1/2})/L^2 \quad \dots(2.34)$$

Further, where the area at the free end of each pin is denoted by s and the wafer-to-pin contact rate is denoted by N , since $N = s \cdot n$, it follows that:

In the case of grid-like disposition:

$$N = s/L^2 \quad \dots(2.35)$$

In the case of 60-deg. staggering disposition:

$$N = (2/3^{1/2}) \cdot s/L^2 \quad \dots(2.36)$$

Therefore, the wafer-to-pin contact rate N is determined by the area s at the free end face of the pin and the pin pitch L . According to experiences of semiconductor processes, the practical contact rate N is about 0.008 in a case where the pin pitch L is about 2 mm, and the pin free end face has a diameter 0.2 mm, namely, the area s of the free end face of the pin is $s = \pi \cdot (0.1)^2 = 0.0314 \text{ mm}^2$. Thus, by machining the pin free end face to a diameter of about 0.05 mm, the pin pitch L can be reduced to 0.5 mm while keeping the contact rate of substantially the same level.

Thus, it follows that:

$$L \geq 0.0005 \quad \dots(2.37)$$

In Figure 25, it corresponds to a right-hand side zone of a solid line 352.

Next, the largest pin pitch L which can be used in practice is determined by the periodicity of a

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local warp of the wafer. In practice, a wafer has various warps of different periodicities, such as those from a global warp extending throughout the wafer to a warp having a very fine periodicity. It is an important function of a wafer chuck to correct these warps to accomplish the flatness. However, with a pin chuck, it is in principle unable to correct a warp having a periodicity smaller than the pin pitch. Namely, it is necessary to make the pin pitch smaller than the smallest periodicity of a warp, of an amplitude of about 13 nm, which may have an adverse influence as a wafer distortion. In order to accomplish a positive correction effect, a pin pitch not greater than a half of the smallest periodicity has to be used. As regards the periodicity of a wafer warp, while details are not known because of difficulties in separation from the thickness non-uniformness or of the measuring precision, it should be expected that a warp of a period of about 10 mm at the largest may remain though the wafer warp may be improved in future. In consideration of it, the pin pitch should desirably be set to be 5 mm or less.

$$L \leq 0.005$$

...(2.38)

In Figure 25, it corresponds to a zone on the left-hand side of a solid line 353.

It is seen from the above that the practical range for the vacuum pressure P and the pin pitch L

are determined in accordance with equations (2.22), (2.31), (2.32), (2.37) and (2.38), as follows:

$$P \leq 0.00427/L^3$$

$$33 \leq P \leq 100000$$

$$5 \quad 0.0005 \leq L \leq 0.005 \quad \dots (2.39)$$

In Figure 25, it corresponds to the range as enclosed by solid lines 341, 351, 352, 350 and 353.

While the foregoing description has been made with reference to the portion where the pin-like protrusions 310 are juxtaposed continuously along one direction with a pin pitch L, that is, the central portion of the chuck inside the outer peripheral portion thereof, description will now be made on the outer peripheral portion of the chuck. Figure 19 is a sectional view for explaining flexure of a wafer 2 as attracted and held by the outer peripheral portion of the chuck. In this drawing, the partition wall 312 is provided just inside the outermost circumferential protrusion 313, and the height of the partition wall 312 is made lower than the top face of the protrusion 313 by about 1 - 2 microns. This is because, with a gap of about 1 - 2 microns, a decrease of vacuum pressure for attraction is so small that it causes no problem. On the other hand, even if a dust particle of a diameter smaller than the difference of 1 - 2 microns is adhered to the partition wall 312, it does not contact the substrate. Thus, it does not cause an

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increase of the contract rate.

As regards a material dynamics model for the state of flexure of a wafer at the outer peripheral portion of the chuck, a model of a beam having a fixed end and another free end and receiving a even distributed load, as shown in Figure 20, applies.

However, the outermost circumferential pin 313 supports a wafer 302 with its corner, not the center of the pin, as shown in Figure 19. The pin pitch L in this case is the distance from the inside corner of the pin 313 to the pin 314 which is located inside thereof by one pitch.

Where the maximum flexure amount is denoted by v , it is expressed as follows:

$$v = (w \cdot L^4) / (184.6 \cdot E \cdot I) \quad \dots (2.40)$$

By modifying this equation by using equations (2.1) and (2.2), it follows that:

$$v = (P \cdot L^4) / (15.38 \cdot E \cdot h^3) \quad \dots (2.41)$$

Also, the tilt angle of the beam flexure curve becomes largest at the supporting position of the outermost pin 313. If this largest tilt angle is denoted by α , it follows that:

$$\alpha = (w \cdot L^3) / (48 \cdot E \cdot I) \quad \dots (2.42)$$

When this is modified by using equations (2.1) and

(2.2), it follows that:

$$\alpha = (P \cdot L^3) / (4 \cdot E \cdot h^3) \quad \dots (2.43)$$

Thus, from equation (2.8), the largest positional

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deviation u is give as follows:

$$u = [(P \cdot L^3)/(8 \cdot E \cdot h^2)] \cdot k \quad \dots(2.44)$$

Therefore, where the wafer flatness as a flat wafer is attracted in practice is V_2 , the wafer

- 5 distortion is U_2 and the correction coefficients depending on the pin disposition, like those of the wafer central portion, are c_1 and c_2 , it follows that:

$$V_2 = v \cdot c_1 = [(P \cdot L^4)/(15.38 \cdot E \cdot h^3)] \cdot c_1 \quad \dots(2.45)$$

$$U_2 = u \cdot c_2 = [(P \cdot L^3)/(8 \cdot E \cdot h^2)] \cdot k \cdot c_2 \quad \dots(2.46)$$

- 10 Since the wafer flatness V_1 and the wafer distortion U_1 as a flat wafer is attracted in practice are expressed by equations (2.10) and (2.11), also in the case of the wafer outer peripheral portion, if a wafer flatness tolerance as being tolerable in a chuck
15 is dz and similarly the wafer distortion tolerance is $dxdy$, it follows that:

$$dz \geq [(P \cdot L^4)/(15.38 \cdot E \cdot h^3)] \cdot c_1 \quad \dots(2.47)$$

$$dxdy \geq [(P \cdot L^3)/(8 \cdot E \cdot h^2)] \cdot k \cdot c_2 \quad \dots(2.48)$$

- 20 When equations (2.47) and (2.48) are modified, it follows that:

$$P \leq [(15.38 \cdot E \cdot h^3 \cdot dz)/c_1] \cdot (1/L^4) \quad \dots(2.49)$$

$$P \leq [(8 \cdot E \cdot h^2 \cdot dxdy)/(k \cdot c_2)] \cdot (1/L^3) \quad \dots(2.50)$$

- Thus, by arranging the chuck with a vacuum pressure P and a pin pitch L , satisfying both of equations (2.49)
25 and (2.50), the wafer flatness and the distortion can be made smaller than the tolerances dz and $dxdy$, respectively.

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On the other hand, as regards these two conditions, if the pin pitch L is not greater than a certain value and as long as the condition of equation (2.50) is satisfied, the condition of equation (2.49) is also satisfied. This value for the pitch L can be determined under a condition that the right side of equation (2.50) is smaller than the right side of equation (2.49), and it is given as follows:

$$L \leq [(1.92 \cdot k \cdot c_2) / c_1] \cdot [(h \cdot dz) / dx dy] \quad \dots (2.51)$$

Namely, within the range in which the pin pitch L satisfies equation (2.51), a chuck with a vacuum pressure P and a pin pitch L satisfying equation (2.50) may be used.

Thus, now a case wherein a typical Si wafer of a diameter 200 mm is attracted and held by a pin chuck having a grid-like pin disposition is considered, like the example of the wafer central portion described hereinbefore. It is taken that the longitudinal elasticity coefficient $E = 1.69 \times 10^{11}$ N/m, the thickness $h = 0.725$ mm, the neutral plane correction coefficient $k = 1$, the correction coefficients $c_1 = 4$ and $c_2 = 2.8$. Also, in a semiconductor process of 0.25 micron rule, the wafer flatness tolerance dz is 80 nm and the wafer distortion tolerance $dx dy$ is 5 nm. Then, while taking the unit of pressure P is N/m^2 and the unit of pitch L is m, from equations (2.50), it follows that:

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$$P \leq 0.0127/L^3 \quad \dots(2.52)$$

Figure 26 is a graph for explaining the range for the vacuum pressure P and the pin pitch L which can be used in practice, wherein the pin pitch L is taken on the axis of abscissa, and the vacuum pressure P is taken on the axis of ordinate. In Figure 26, the range for the vacuum pressure P and the pin pitch L satisfying equation (2.52) is at the lower left zone below a solid line 362.

When the range is calculated with a thickness $h = 0.626$ mm, it follows that:

$$P \leq 0.00094/L^3 \quad \dots(2.53)$$

Thus, in Figure 26, the range corresponds to a lower left zone below a solid line 363.

Similarly, when the range is calculated for a thickness $h = 0.825$ mm, it follows that:

$$P \leq 0.00164/L^3 \quad \dots(2.54)$$

In Figure 26, it corresponds to a lower left zone below a solid line 361.

Also, when the range is calculated for a wafer distortion tolerance $dxdy = 2.5$ nm and a thickness $h = 0.825$ mm, it follows that:

$$P \leq 0.00082/L^3 \quad \dots(2.55)$$

In Figure 26, it corresponds to a lower left zone below a solid line 364.

Similarly, when the range is calculated for $dxdy = 2.5$ nm and $h = 0.725$ mm, it follows that:

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$$P \leq 0.00063/L^3 \quad \dots(2.56)$$

In Figure 26, it corresponds to a lower left zone below a solid line 365.

Similarly, when the range is calculated for
5 $dx dy = 2.5 \text{ nm}$ and $h = 0.625 \text{ mm}$, it follows that:

$$P \leq 0.00047/L^3 \quad \dots(2.57)$$

In Figure 26, it corresponds to a lower left zone below a solid line 366.

Also, when the range is calculated for $dx dy =$
10 1 nm and $h = 0.825 \text{ mm}$, it follows that:

$$P \leq 0.00033/L^3 \quad \dots(2.58)$$

In Figure 26, it corresponds to a lower left zone below a solid line 367.

Similarly, when the range is calculated for
15 $dx dy = 1 \text{ nm}$ and $h = 0.725 \text{ mm}$, it follows that:

$$P \leq 0.00025/L^3 \quad \dots(2.59)$$

In Figure 26, it corresponds to a lower left zone below a solid line 368.

Similarly, when the range is calculated for
20 $dx dy = 1 \text{ nm}$ and $h = 0.625 \text{ mm}$, it follows that:

$$P \leq 0.00019/L^3 \quad \dots(2.60)$$

In Figure 26, it corresponds to a lower left zone below a solid line 369.

As described above, the practical range for
25 the vacuum pressure P and the pin pitch L at the wafer outer peripheral portion has been considered in accordance with equation (2.50) and in respect to

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various values of the wafer thickness h and the wafer distortion tolerance $dx dy$. In these examples, since the range of the pin pitch L as determined by equation (2.51) satisfies a standard pin pitch (not greater than 5 mm) to be described later, the condition of equation (2.49) is also satisfied. This is because, even in a case where the right side of equation (2.51) becomes smallest, that is, even in the case of a smallest thickness $h = 0.625$ mm and a largest $dx dy = 5$ nm, a relation $L \leq 0.013$ is given such that the standard pin pitch 5 mm to be described later is satisfied. Therefore, by arranging the chuck with a vacuum pressure P and a pin pitch L , also at the wafer outer peripheral portion, which are selected out of the range described above, a desired wafer flatness tolerance dz and a desired wafer distortion tolerance $dx dy$ can be satisfied.

Here, it should be noted that, in the normal pin pitch, satisfaction of only equation (2.50) is accompanied by satisfaction of equation (2.49) means that there is a more strict condition involved in reducing the wafer distortion to a tolerance or smaller, as compared with improving the wafer flatness.

By the way, the ordinary range for the chuck vacuum pressure P is defined by equations (2.31) and (2.32) like the case of the wafer central portion, and

in Figure 26, it corresponds to a zone above a solid line 370 and a zone below a solid line 371.

On the other hand, the ordinary range for the pin pitch L of the chuck is defined by equations (2.37) and (2.38), like the case of the wafer central portion, and in Figure 26, it corresponds to a zone on the right-hand side of a solid line 372 and a zone on the left-hand side of a solid line 373.

It is seen from the above that the practical range for the vacuum pressure P and the pin pitch L are determined in accordance with equations (2.54), (2.31), (2.32), (2.37) and (2.38), as follows:

$$P \leq 0.00164/L^3$$

$$33 \leq P \leq 100000$$

$$0.0005 \leq L \leq 0.005 \quad \dots (2.61)$$

Thus, in Figure 26, it is a zone as enclosed by solid lines 361, 371, 372, 370 and 373.

As described above, because the wafer central portion and the wafer peripheral portion are different in respect to the manner of supporting the wafer, the chuck may be structured to have respective vacuum pressures P and respective pin pitches L selected out of the ranges described hereinbefore, by which a desired wafer flatness tolerance dz and a desired wafer distortion tolerance $dx dy$ can be satisfied throughout the whole wafer surface.

At the wafer central portion and the wafer

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peripheral portion, a common vacuum pressure P and/or a common pin pitch L may be set, within the ranges described hereinbefore. Alternatively, they may be set independently of each other. Where vacuum pressures P should be set independently of each other, in addition to the outermost peripheral partition wall 312, a continuous inside partition wall may be provided so as to connect all the pins 314 disposed circumferentially inside the outermost pins 313 by one pitch, and vacuum suction opening bores may be formed in the wafer central portion and the wafer peripheral portion of the chuck such that vacuum pressures can be supplied to them independently. Further, as regards the inner partition wall, a ring-like partition wall 334 (Figure 21) may be provided with a small inward shift from the pin 314. This facilitates formation of a step at the inner partition wall 334. The height of the inner partition wall should preferably be made lower than the top face of the pin 314 by 1 - 2 microns. This is because, in that structure, it does not contact a wafer even if the same is warped. Also, if a dust particle of a diameter smaller than that spacing is adhered, it does not contact the wafer. The contract rate is not raised.

Where the height of the inner partition wall is made lower than the top face of the pin 314 and a vacuum pressure is supplied only to the wafer central

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portion, the vacuum pressure at the wafer peripheral portion can be made lower than that at the wafer central portion. Alternatively, an opening bore being communicated with the atmosphere may be formed in the wafer central portion, and a vacuum pressure may be supplied only to the wafer peripheral portion. In that occasion, the vacuum pressure at the wafer peripheral portion can be held higher than that at the wafer central portion. In this case, only a single vacuum supplying line is necessary.

While the outermost partition wall 312 is disposed with a slight inward shift from the pin 313 as shown in Figure 19 or 21, it may be provided outside the pin 313. Alternatively, a continuous partition wall for connecting all the pin 313 may be provided so as to surround the chuck peripheral portion. As a further alternative, while the contact rate becomes larger, the pins 313 may be omitted and, in place thereof, an outermost partition wall of the same height as the top face of the pin 313 may be provided.

Arranging the structure so that the vacuum pressure P can be set independently at the wafer central portion and the wafer peripheral portion, as described above, enables that the vacuum pressure at the wafer central portion is set to assure that the wafer can be held even if the X-Y stage moves at its

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maximum acceleration, for example, while the vacuum pressure at the wafer peripheral portion is set to assure that even a wafer having a large warp throughout the whole wafer can be attracted. More specifically, by setting the vacuum pressure at the wafer peripheral portion higher than that at the wafer central portion, and by making the pin pitch narrow, the attraction of the wafer at the wafer peripheral portion can be assured regardless of the presence/absence of a wafer warp. This enables good flatness correction at the peripheral portion as well as good correction of the wafer distortion. The vacuum pressure at the wafer central portion may be kept at a lowest level for wafer holding, by which the pin pitch can be made large. This enables decreasing the contact rate.

Further, the same pin pitch may be set at the wafer central portion and the wafer peripheral portion, while on the other hand, the vacuum pressure at the peripheral portion may be set appropriately lower than that at the wafer central portion. This enables setting the same distortion amount at the wafer central portion and the peripheral portion, thus avoiding an increase of the contact rate.

The vacuum pressure at the peripheral portion may set appropriately lower than that at the wafer central portion and the pin pitch may be made narrow

properly. This enables setting the same distortion amount at the wafer central portion and the peripheral portion and, additionally, it leads to enlargement of the range in which their distribution shapes are approximately registered. Details will be explained with reference to Figures 27A and 27B. Figure 27A shows a flexure curve of a wafer between the pin pitch. The axis of ordinate shows the flexure amount v. Figure 27B shows the shape of distribution of wafer distortion between the pin pitch. The axis of ordinate shows the wafer distortion u. In Figures 27A and 27B, the axis of abscissa depicts the wafer position x between or inside the pin pitch, with rightward direction corresponding to the wafer outward direction. In Figure 27A, denoted at 380 is a flexure curve at the wafer central portion. Denoted at 381 is a flexure curve at the wafer peripheral portion where the vacuum pressure is made properly lower than that at the wafer central portion and also the pin pitch is made properly narrow. Denoted at 382 is a flexure curve corresponding to a conventional example wherein, while the vacuum pressure is held constant, the pin pitch is made appropriately narrower than that at the wafer central portion. In Figure 27B, denoted at 383, 384 and 385 are distribution shapes of wafer distortions corresponding to the flexure curve 380, the flexure curve 381 and the flexure curve 382,

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respectively.

It is seen from these drawings that, as regards the wafer distortion distribution shape, in the curves 382 and 385 of the conventional example, only in a narrow range a of the wafer position x, the shape is approximately registered. As compared therewith, in the curves 383 and 384 of this embodiment, in a wide range b which is about twice of the range a, the shape is approximately registered. Thus, the range for registration is widened. Although there remains a region, outside the range b, in which the shape is not registered, since at an outermost periphery of a wafer there is an invalid area of at least about 1 mm where no semiconductor device is formed, this does not cause a particular problem provided that the pin pitch is not greater than about 2 mm. Since the wafer distortions produced at the wafer central portion and the peripheral portion can have substantially the same shape, as described above, if a chuck having the same pin disposition for every shot of a wafer to be exposed is used, it can be accomplished that a distortion of substantially the same distribution shape is produced in every shot. In that occasion, an image to be printed on every shot can be corrected in accordance with the distribution shape of the wafer distortion such as by driving or rotating an imaging lens or a reticle or by correcting

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the reticle pattern position beforehand. As a result, the overlay precision can be improved much more, throughout a wide range including the wafer peripheral portion.

5 As regards the vacuum pressures at the wafer central portion and the peripheral portion, preferably they should be kept at a desired constant level without being influenced by a variation in atmospheric pressure, for example. To this end, a precision
10 regulator, for example, may be used to supply a constant vacuum pressure, or the vacuum pressers may be detected and controlled to a constant level. Particularly, in this case, it is desirable since a good reproducibility of the wafer distortion
15 distribution shape is assured thereby.

It is to be noted that Figures 27A and 27B are based on the following equations according to a material dynamics. First, the flexure curve 380 at the wafer central portion is given by:

$$20 \quad v = [(P \cdot L^4)/(2 \cdot E \cdot h^3)](x^2/L^2 - 2x^3/L^3 + x^4/L^4) \dots(2.62)$$

The flexure curves 382 and 382 at the wafer peripheral portion are given by:

$$25 \quad v = [(Q \cdot R^4)/(4 \cdot E \cdot h^3)][-(R-x)/R + \{3 \cdot (R-x)^3/R^3\} - \{2 \cdot (R-x)^4/R^4\}] \dots(2.63)$$

Here, for the curve 381, $Q = 0.85 \cdot P$ and $R = 0.87 \cdot L$.

For the curve 382, $Q = P$ and $R = 0.83 \cdot L$.

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The distribution shape 383 of the wafer distortion corresponding to the flexure curve 380 is given by:

$$u = [(P \cdot L^3)/(2 \cdot E \cdot h^2)] [x/L - (3 \cdot x^2)/L^2 + (2 \cdot x^3)/L^3] \quad \dots (2.64)$$

Also, the distribution shape of the wafer distortion corresponding to the flexure curves 381 and 382 is given by:

$$u = [(Q \cdot R^3)/(8 \cdot E \cdot h^2)] [-1 + \{9 \cdot (R-x)^2\}/R^2 - \{8 \cdot (R-x)^3\}/R^3] \quad \dots (2.65)$$

Here, for the curve 384, $Q = 0.85 \cdot P$ and $R = 0.87 \cdot L$.

For the curve 385, $Q = P$ and $R = 0.83 \cdot L$.

On the other hand, due to the influence of a polishing process during the wafer production or the influence of various processes during the semiconductor manufacture, there are cases wherein the periodicity of local warps on a wafer is different between the wafer central portion and the peripheral portion. Where the periodicity at the peripheral portion is longer than that at the wafer central portion, the pin pitch at the wafer peripheral portion may be made wider than that at the wafer central portion. Also, the vacuum pressures may be set respectively and appropriately so as not produce wafer distortion. By doing so, the contact rate at the wafer peripheral portion where a dust particle can be relatively easily adhered, can be lowered.

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Further, although the free end faces of the pin-like protrusions constituting the wafer carrying and supporting surface have been explained as a super flat surface, depending on the actual processing precision, a very small tilt may be produced there. In that occasion, therefore, the pitch of the pins which support the wafer may not be exactly the same as the pin pitch L described hereinbefore. At the wafer central portion, in a worst case, for example, as shown in Figure 22, the free end faces of the pins 310 and 336 may be tilted in opposite directions. In that occasion, the pitch of the points contacting the wafer becomes equal to L_x which is larger than the pin pitch L by an amount corresponding to the pin diameter.

Thus, in this case, the wafer flatness and the distortion will become larger than V_1 and U_1 in equations (2.10) and (2.11). On the other hand, at the wafer peripheral portion, in a worst case, for example, as shown in Figure 23, the free end faces of the pins 313 and 314 may be tilted down toward the inside as illustrated. In that occasion, the pitch becomes equal to L_y which is larger than the pin pitch L by an amount 1.5 times the pin diameter. Therefore, in this case, the wafer flatness and the wafer distortion become larger than V_2 and U_2 in equations (2.45) and (2.46). In order that the wafer distortion satisfies its tolerance throughout the whole surface,

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as described above, the remainder to be provided by subtracting a value 1.5 times the pin diameter from the pin pitch L determined as described above may be taken as the actual pin pitch. However, in that case, the pin-to-wafer contact rate increases accordingly, and it is undesirable. Therefore, it is effective to process and provide a flat surface without having a tilt that may cause an adverse influence, or to reduce the pin diameter as much as possible. Also, as shown in Figure 24, the free end face of the pin may be formed into a spherical shape. This is substantially equivalent to an example wherein the pin diameter is substantially equal to zero, and the contact rate can desirably be reduced very much. Further, the free end may be formed with a concave face without having a tilt, although the machining is not very easy.

At the wafer outer peripheral portion as shown in Figure 19, the wafer portion projecting outwardly beyond the outermost pins 313 may protrude upwardly due to the deformation between the pins 313 and 314 at the peripheral portion. The wafer flatness and the wafer distortion in this portion will be described. The tilt angle at the peripheral portion becomes largest at the supporting position of the pin 313. This largest tilt angle α is expressed by equation (2.43) as described hereinbefore. In the range outside the supporting position of the pin 313,

the largest tilt angle α is kept constantly.

Therefore, the wafer distortion as determined by the largest tilt angle is held constant, without any increase. Thus, there is no problem in relation to

the wafer distortion. However, if the amount of outward projection of the wafer is large, since it projects with the same largest tilt angle α , the amount of such upward protruding has to be kept smaller than the tolerance dz for the wafer flatness.

Therefore, when the amount of wafer extension is J , it follows that:

$$dz \geq J \cdot \alpha \quad \dots(2.66)$$

Taking equation (2.43) and the correction coefficient c_2 with the pin disposition into account, it follows that:

$$J \leq [(4 \cdot E \cdot h^3) / (P \cdot L^3 \cdot c_2)] \cdot dz \quad \dots(2.67)$$

Although the right side of equation (2.67) above becomes smallest when $P \cdot L^3$ becomes largest, from equation (2.50), now it follows that:

$$P \cdot L^3 \leq (8 \cdot E \cdot h^2 \cdot dx dy) / (k \cdot c_2) \quad \dots(2.68)$$

Therefore, equation (2.67) can be rewritten as follows:

$$J \leq (k \cdot h \cdot dz) / (2 \cdot dx dy) \quad \dots(2.69)$$

Further, the right side of equation (2.69) above

becomes smallest when the neutral plane correction coefficient $k = 1$, the smallest thickness $h = 0.625$ mm, the wafer flatness tolerance $dz = 80$ nm, and the

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largest wafer distortion tolerance $dx dy = 5 \text{ nm}$. Then,
 $J \leq 0.005$. Namely, in order to satisfy the wafer
flatness tolerance dz due to deformation inside the
pin pitch, the wafer projection amount may be held to
5 mm or less. In that occasion, there occurs no
problem, even in consideration of the diameter of the
outermost pin 313, the outside shape tolerance of the
wafer, the position precision of the same as placed on
the chuck, and the width of the partition 312 when the
same is provided outside the pin 313. Thus, the
condition for correcting the wafer warp at the outer
peripheral portion is more strict and, in this
respect, the pin 313 at the outermost periphery of the
chuck should desirably be disposed close to the outer
periphery of the wafer as much as possible.

Although in the forgoing description the pin
pitch of the chuck is explained as L and, at the wafer
central portion and the peripheral portion, the chuck
has a vacuum pressure P and a pin pitch L selected out
of the above-described ranges, the pin pitch may of
course be set separately and independently at the
wafer central portion and the peripheral portion.
Further, it is not necessary that a uniform pitch is
defined in the wafer central portion or in the wafer
peripheral portion. As long as it is within the
above-described range is satisfied, a non-uniform pin
pitch may be used.

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The substrate to be held by the chuck is not limited to a Si wafer. For example, various substrates such as a gallium arsenic wafer, a composite adhesion wafer, a glass substrate, a liquid crystal panel substrate, and a reticle may be used. Further, as regards the outside shape thereof, it may not be circular, and it may have a rectangular shape, for example. In that occasion, the outside shape of the chuck may be changed in accordance with the outside shape of the substrate.

Further, while the chuck has been explained as a vacuum attraction type chuck, the present invention is not limited to it. The chuck may comprise an electrostatic type chuck, or it may use a combination of a vacuum attraction type and an electrostatic type. In these cases, the vacuum pressure P in the above-described embodiments may be replaced by an attraction force of a different type or a combination of it with the vacuum pressure.

Although the chuck has been described with reference to a pin chuck, the present invention is applicable also to chucks having different shapes. For example, a ring-like chuck having concentric ring-like recesses (suction grooves) and concentric ring-like protrusions for defining a wafer supporting surface, which are alternately formed, may be used. In that occasion, the pitch of the ring-like

protrusions in the radial direction may be regarded as the pin pitch L. At the wafer central portion and the outer peripheral portion, a vacuum pressure P and a pin pitch L as has been described with reference to the embodiments may be set there. Substantially the same advantageous results are attainable with it.

In accordance with the present invention, degradation of the wafer flatness and distortion due to a flexure of a substrate inside the pin pitch as the same is held, can be reduced remarkably. Therefore, in the procedure for manufacture of very fine devices, the defect of device can be reduced and the yield rate can be improved significantly.

Referring now to Figure 18, an exposure apparatus into which a substrate attracting and holding system such as described above can be incorporated, will be explained.

Figure 28 is a schematic view of a general structure of a reduction projection exposure apparatus. As shown in the drawing, a reticle 402 which is an original having a pattern to be transferred to a substrate 402 such as a silicon wafer, for example, is mounted on a reticle stage 401 through a reticle chuck. The reticle is illuminated with exposure light directed thereto through an illumination optical system 403. The exposure light passing through the reticle 402 is reduced in scale by

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a projection optical system 405, to 1/5, and it is projected on the substrate 402 which is a workpiece to be processed. A chuck 1 which is a substrate holding system for holding the substrate 402, as described hereinbefore, is mounted on an X-Y stage 406 which is movable along a horizontal plane. The substrate 402 has a thin coating of a resist material (photosensitive material) applied thereto beforehand, which material produces a chemical reaction in response to irradiation with the exposure light. It functions as an etching mask in a subsequent process. Denoted at 407 and 408 are an off-axis alignment scope and a surface position measuring unit, respectively.

The exposure sequence is such as follows.

Substrates 402 to be exposed are loaded into the exposure apparatus automatically or by hands of an operator and, in this state, in response to an exposure start signal, the operation of the exposure apparatus starts. A first substrate 402 is conveyed onto the chuck 1 mounted on the X-Y stage 406, by means of a conveying system, and the substrate is attracted and held by the chuck. Subsequently, alignment marks recorded on the substrate 401 are detected by the off-axis alignment scope 407, and on the basis of which, a magnification, a rotation and X and Y deviations are measured. Then, the position correction is performed. The X-Y stage 406 moves the

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manufacture of microdevices such as semiconductor chips (e.g. ICs or LSIs), liquid crystal panels, CCDs, thin film magnetic heads or micro-machines, for example.

5 Step 1 is a design process for designing a circuit of a semiconductor device. Step 2 is a process for making a mask on the basis of the circuit pattern design. Step 3 is a process for preparing a wafer by using a material such as silicon. Step 4 is
10 a wafer process (called a pre-process) wherein, by using the so prepared mask and wafer, circuits are practically formed on the wafer through lithography. Step 5 subsequent to this is an assembling step (called a post-process) wherein the wafer having been
15 processed by step 4 is formed into semiconductor chips. This step includes an assembling (dicing and bonding) process and a packaging (chip sealing) process. Step 6 is an inspection step wherein operation check, durability check and so on for the
20 semiconductor devices provided by step 5, are carried out. With these processes, semiconductor devices are completed and they are shipped (step 7).

Figure 30 is a flow chart showing details of the wafer process.

25 Step 11 is an oxidation process for oxidizing the surface of a wafer. Step 12 is a CVD process for forming an insulating film on the wafer surface. Step

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13 is an electrode forming process for forming electrodes upon the wafer by vapor deposition. Step 14 is an ion implanting process for implanting ions to the wafer. Step 15 is a resist process for applying a resist (photosensitive material) to the wafer. Step 16 is an exposure process for printing, by exposure, the circuit pattern of the mask on the wafer through the exposure apparatus described above. Step 17 is a developing process for developing the exposed wafer. Step 18 is an etching process for removing portions other than the developed resist image. Step 19 is a resist separation process for separating the resist material remaining on the wafer after being subjected to the etching process. By repeating these processes, circuit patterns are superposedly formed on the wafer.

With these processes, high density microdevices can be manufactured.

While the invention has been described with reference to the structures disclosed herein, it is not confined to the details set forth and this application is intended to cover such modifications or changes as may come within the purposes of the improvements or the scope of the following claims.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A substrate attracting and holding method,
comprising the steps of:

5 supporting a substrate by use of a protrusion
provided on a holding table for holding the substrate,
wherein the protrusion is disposed to be placed in a
predetermined positional relation with a position of
an alignment mark to be used for processing the
substrate or a position with respect to which an
10 alignment mark is to be produced; and

reducing a pressure between the holding table
and the substrate to attract and hold the substrate.

2. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the
15 substrate is supported so that the position of the
alignment mark or the position with respect to which
the alignment mark is to be produced is to be placed
above the protrusion.

20 3. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the
substrate is supported so that the position of the
alignment mark or the position with respect to which
the alignment mark is to be produced is to be placed
at a central portion in relation to disposition of the
25 protrusion.

4. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the

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substrate is supported so that, for different processing regions of the substrate, the protrusion is to be placed at the same position.

5 5. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the substrate is supported so that the protrusion is placed at the same position with reference to the position of the alignment mark or the position with respect to which the alignment mark is to be produced.

10 6. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the position of the alignment mark or the position with respect to which the alignment mark is to be produced is placed outside a processing region of the
15 substrate.

 7. A method according to Claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the protrusion surrounds a zone corresponding the position of the alignment mark or
20 the position with respect to which the alignment mark is to be produced.

 8. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the protrusion comprises at least one of a rim type
25 protrusion and a pin contact type protrusion.

 9. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the

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pressure of an air between the holding table and the substrate is adjusted.

10. A method according to Claim 9, wherein a
5 substrate attracting force in a processing region of the substrate is adjusted even for the whole substrate.

11. A method according to Claim 1, wherein at
10 least a portion of the protrusion surrounds a zone corresponding the position of the alignment mark or the position with respect to which the alignment mark is to be produced, and wherein the pressure of an air between the holding table and the substrate in a
15 region as surrounded by the protrusion is adjusted.

12. A method according to Claim 1, wherein
position adjustment is performed so that a
predetermined positional relationship is defined
20 between the protrusion of the holding table and the alignment mark or the position with respect to which the alignment mark is to be produced.

13. A substrate attracting and holding method,
25 comprising the steps of:

supporting a substrate by use of a protrusion provided on a holding table for holding the substrate,

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reducing a pressure between the holding table and the substrate to attract and hold the substrate.

a holding table for holding a substrate;

said protrusion being disposed to be placed in a predetermined positional relationship with a position of an alignment mark to be used for processing the substrate or a position with respect to which an alignment mark is to be produced.

16. A system according to Claim 14, wherein the protrusion is disposed so that the position of the alignment mark or the position with respect to which the alignment mark is to be produced is to be placed at a central portion in relation to disposition of the protrusion.

17. A system according to Claim 14, wherein the protrusion is provided so that, for different processing regions of the substrate, the protrusion is to be placed at the same position.

18. A system according to Claim 14, wherein the protrusion is provided so that the protrusion is placed at the same position with reference to the position of the alignment mark or the position with respect to which the alignment mark is to be produced.

19. A system according to Claim 14, wherein the position of the alignment mark or the position with respect to which the alignment mark is to be produced is placed outside a processing region of the substrate.

20. A system according to Claim 14, wherein at least a portion of the protrusion is disposed to surround a zone corresponding the position of the alignment mark or the position with respect to which the alignment mark is to be produced.

21. A system according to Claim 14, wherein the protrusion comprises at least one of a rim type protrusion and a pin contact type protrusion.

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22. A system according to Claim 14, further comprising a mechanism for reducing a pressure between said holding table and the substrate.

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23. A system according to Claim 22, wherein said mechanism comprises a pressure adjusting mechanism for adjusting a pressure of an air between said holding table and the substrate.

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24. A system according to Claim 23, wherein said pressure adjusting mechanism is arranged to produce a substrate attracting force in a processing region of the substrate which force is even for the whole substrate.

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25. A system according to Claim 14, wherein at least a portion of the protrusion is disposed to surround a zone corresponding the position of the alignment mark or the position with respect to which the alignment mark is to be produced, and said system further comprises a pressure adjusting mechanism for adjusting a pressure of an air between said holding table and the substrate in a region as surrounded by the protrusion.

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26. A system according to Claim 14, further

comprising a position adjusting mechanism for
adjusting a relative position of the protrusion of
said holding table and the alignment mark or the
position with respect to which the alignment mark is
5 to be produced, so that a predetermined positional
relationship is defined between them.

27. An exposure apparatus, comprising:
a holding table for holding a substrate;
10 a protrusion provided on said holding table,
said protrusion being disposed to be placed in a
predetermined positional relationship with a position
of an alignment mark to be used for processing the
substrate or a position with respect to which an
15 alignment mark is to be produced; and
exposure means for transferring, by exposure,
a pattern of an original to the substrate as attracted
and held by said holding table.

20 28. An apparatus according to Claim 27, further
comprising a controller for calculating an error in
coordinates of an alignment mark to be produced as a
result of deformation of the substrate as the same is
attracted, on the basis of a positional relationship
25 between the protrusion and the alignment mark of the
substrate.

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29. An apparatus according to Claim 28, wherein
said controller has one of a function and a table for
calculating the error on the basis of the positional
relationship between the protrusion and the alignment
5 mark of the substrate.

30. An apparatus according to Claim 28, wherein
said controller is operable to correct the position of
the alignment mark as measured, on the basis of the
10 calculated error in coordinates of the alignment mark.

31. An apparatus according to Claim 28, wherein
said controller is operable to perform alignment of
the substrate on the basis of the error in coordinates
15 of the alignment mark.

32. A device manufacturing method, comprising the
steps of:

supporting a substrate by use of a protrusion
20 provided on a holding table for holding the substrate,
wherein the protrusion is disposed to be placed in a
predetermined positional relation with a position of
an alignment mark to be used for processing the
substrate or a position with respect to which an
25 alignment mark is to be produced;

reducing a pressure between the holding table
and the substrate to attract and hold the substrate;

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and

printing a pattern of an original on the
substrate as attracted by the holding table.

- 5 33. A substrate attracting and holding system,
comprising:

 a holding table for holding a substrate;

- a protrusion for supporting the substrate and
 having an attraction groove for attracting the
10 substrate; and

 a pressure adjusting mechanism for adjusting
 a pressure between said holding table and the
 substrate.

- 15 34. A substrate attracting and holding system
 having a plurality of protrusions for supporting a
 substrate, for attracting and holding the substrate
 supported on the protrusions, characterized in that a
 disposition pitch L of the protrusions and an
20 attraction force P of the substrate are set so as to
 satisfy a relation:

$$P \cdot L^3 \leq [36 \cdot E \cdot h^2 \cdot dx dy] / [\sqrt{3} \cdot k \cdot c]$$

- where $dx dy$ is a distortion tolerance, E is a
 longitudinal elasticity coefficient, h is a thickness
25 of the substrate, c is a correction coefficient based
 on the protrusion disposition and k is a neutral plane
 correction coefficient.

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35. A substrate attracting and holding system having a plurality of protrusions for supporting a substrate, for attracting and holding the substrate supported on the protrusions, characterized in that a disposition pitch L of the protrusions and an attraction force P of the substrate are set so as to satisfy a relation:

$$P \cdot L^3 \leq 0.00427.$$

36. A system according to Claim 34 or 35, wherein the disposition pitch L and the substrate attraction force P are set to further satisfy relations:

$$G \cdot h \cdot \rho / \mu \leq P \leq 100000$$

$$0.0005 \leq L \leq 0.005$$

wherein h is a thickness of the substrate, ρ is a density of the substrate, μ is a stationary friction coefficient of the substrate, and G is a maximum acceleration of a stage on which said substrate attracting and holding system is mounted.

37. A substrate attracting and holding system having a plurality of protrusions for supporting a substrate, for attracting and holding the substrate supported on the protrusions, characterized in that a disposition pitch L of the protrusions and an attraction force P of the substrate are set so as to

satisfy relations:

$$P \cdot L^3 \leq 0.00427$$

$$33 \leq P \leq 100000, \text{ and}$$

$$0.0005 \leq L \leq 0.005.$$

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38. A substrate attracting and holding system having a plurality of protrusions for supporting a substrate, for attracting and holding the substrate supported on the protrusions, characterized in that the protrusions include an outer peripheral protrusion for supporting an outer peripheral portion of the substrate and a central protrusion for supporting a central portion of the substrate, inside the peripheral portion thereof, and that, when a disposition pitch of the central protrusion is L_a and an attraction force of the substrate at the central protrusion is P_a while a disposition pitch between the outer peripheral protrusion and a central protrusion juxtaposed inside the outer peripheral protrusion is L_b and an attraction force of the substrate between the outer peripheral protrusion and a central protrusion juxtaposed inside the the outer peripheral protrusion is P_b , the disposition pitches L_a and L_b and the attraction forces P_a and P_b are set so as to satisfy relations:

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$$P_a \cdot L_a^3 \leq [36 \cdot E \cdot h^2 \cdot dx dy] / [\sqrt{3} \cdot k \cdot c]$$

$$P_b \cdot L_b^3 \leq [8 \cdot E \cdot h^2 \cdot dx dy] / [k \cdot c]$$

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where $dx dy$ is a distortion tolerance, E is a longitudinal elasticity coefficient, h is a thickness of the substrate, c is a correction coefficient based on the protrusion disposition and k is a neutral plane correction coefficient.

39. A substrate attracting and holding system having a plurality of protrusions for supporting a substrate, for attracting and holding the substrate supported on the protrusions, characterized in that the protrusions include an outer peripheral protrusion for supporting an outer peripheral portion of the substrate and a central protrusion for supporting a central portion of the substrate, inside the peripheral portion thereof, and that, when a disposition pitch of the central protrusion is L_a and an attraction force of the substrate at the central protrusion is P_a while a disposition pitch between the outer peripheral protrusion and a central protrusion juxtaposed inside the outer peripheral protrusion is L_b and an attraction force of the substrate between the outer peripheral protrusion and a central protrusion juxtaposed inside the the outer peripheral protrusion is P_b , the disposition pitches L_a and L_b and the attraction forces P_a and P_b are set so as to satisfy relations:

$$P_a \cdot L_a^3 \leq 0.00427$$

$$Pb \cdot Lb^3 \leq 0.00164.$$

40. A substrate attracting and holding system having a plurality of protrusions for supporting a substrate, for attracting and holding the substrate supported on the protrusions, characterized in that the protrusions include an outer peripheral protrusion for supporting an outer peripheral portion of the substrate and a central protrusion for supporting a central portion of the substrate, inside the peripheral portion thereof, and that, when a disposition pitch of the central protrusion is La and an attraction force of the substrate at the central protrusion is Pa while a disposition pitch between the outer peripheral protrusion and a central protrusion juxtaposed inside the outer peripheral protrusion is Lb and an attraction force of the substrate between the outer peripheral protrusion and a central protrusion juxtaposed inside the the outer peripheral protrusion is Pb , the disposition pitches La and Lb and the attraction forces Pa and Pb are set so as to satisfy relations:

$$Pa \cdot La^3 \leq 0.00427$$

$$33 \leq Pa \leq 100000$$

$$0.0005 \leq La \leq 0.005$$

$$Pb \cdot Lb^3 \leq 0.00164$$

$$33 \leq Pb \leq 100000$$

$$0.0005 \leq L_b \leq 0.005.$$

41. A substrate attracting and holding system having a plurality of protrusions for supporting a substrate, for attracting and holding the substrate supported on the protrusions, characterized in that the protrusions include an outer peripheral protrusion for supporting an outer peripheral portion of the substrate and a central protrusion for supporting a central portion of the substrate, inside the peripheral portion thereof, that a disposition pitch of the central protrusion is made larger than a disposition pitch between the outer peripheral protrusion and a central protrusion juxtaposed inside the outer peripheral protrusion, and that an attraction force of the substrate at the central protrusion is made smaller than an attraction force of the substrate between the outer peripheral protrusion and a central protrusion juxtaposed inside the the outer peripheral protrusion.

42. A substrate attracting and holding system having a plurality of protrusions for supporting a substrate, for attracting and holding the substrate supported on the protrusions, characterized in that the protrusions include an outer peripheral protrusion for supporting an outer peripheral portion of the

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5 substrate and a central protrusion for supporting a
central portion of the substate, inside the peripheral
portion thereof, that a disposition pitch of the
central protrusion is made not less than a disposition
pitch between the outer peripheral protrusion and a
central protrusion juxtaposed inside the outer
peripheral protrusion, and that an attraction force of
the substrate at the central protrusion is is made
larger than an attraction force of the substrate
10 between the outer peripheral protrusion and a central
protrusion juxtaposed inside the the outer peripheral
protrusion.

43. A system according to any one of Claims 34 -
15 42, wherein a free end of the protrusion is formed
into a spherical shape.

44. An exposure apparatus, comprising:
a substrate attracting and holding system as
20 recited in any one of Claims 34 - 43; and
exposure means for transferring, by exposure,
a pattern of an original to a substate as attract and
held by said substrate attracting and holding system.

25 45. A device manufacturing method, characterized
by producing a device through manufacturing processes
including a process for exposing a substrate by use of

an exposure apparatus as recited in Claim 44.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A substrate attracting and holding system includes a holding table for holding a substrate, a protrusion provided on the holding table, the protrusion being disposed to be placed in a predetermined positional relationship with a position of an alignment mark to be used for processing the substrate or a position with respect to which an alignment mark is to be produced.

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FIG. 1A

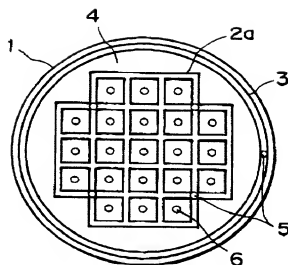


FIG. 1B

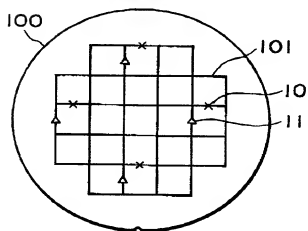
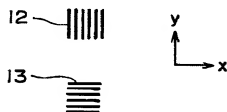


FIG. 1C



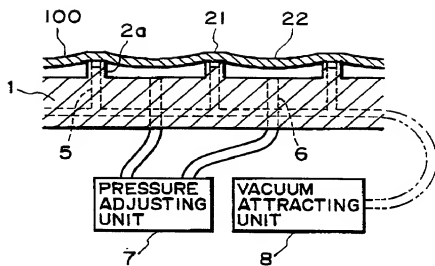


FIG. 2

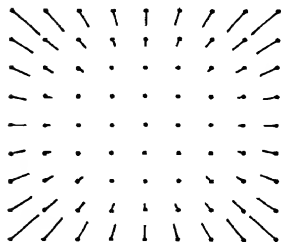


FIG. 3

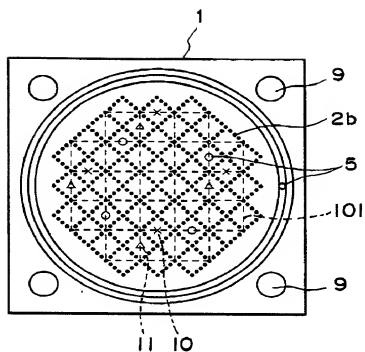


FIG. 4

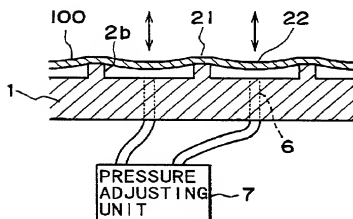


FIG. 5

FIG. 6A

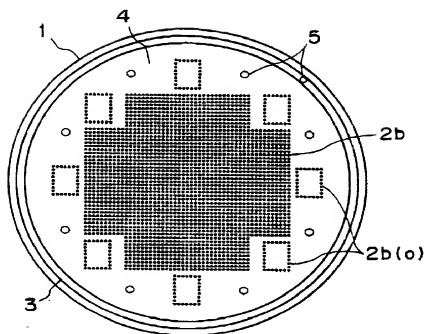


FIG. 6B

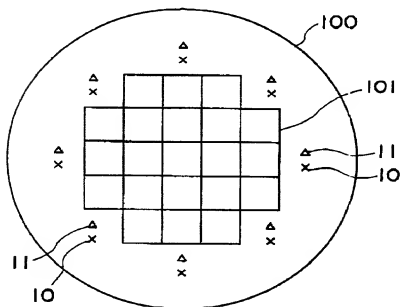


FIG. 6C

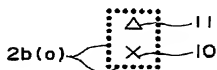


FIG. 7A

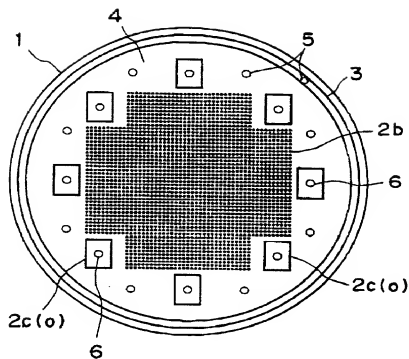
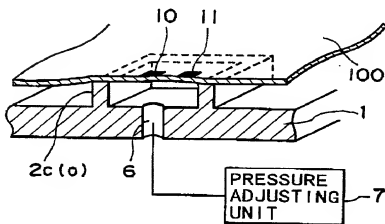
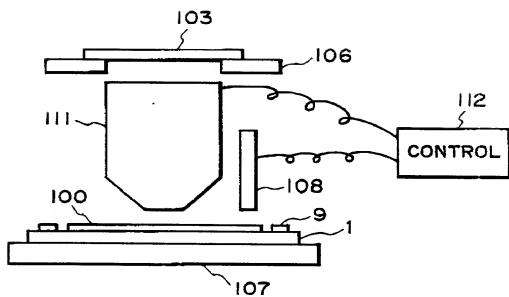


FIG. 7B



FIG. 7C



**FIG. 8**

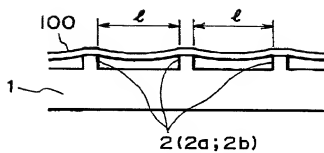


FIG. 9A

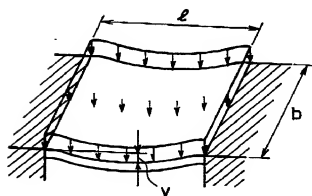


FIG. 9B

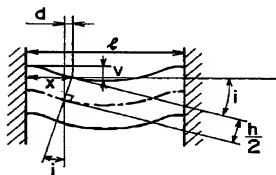


FIG. 9C

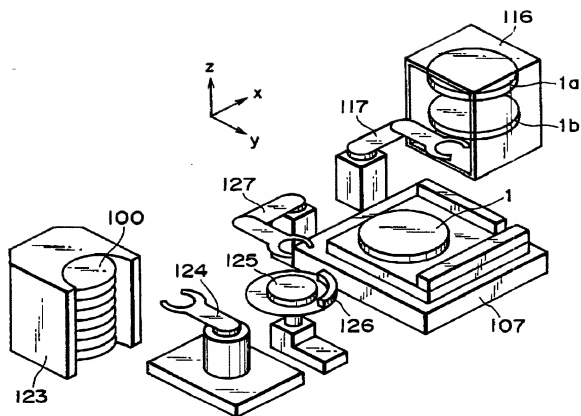
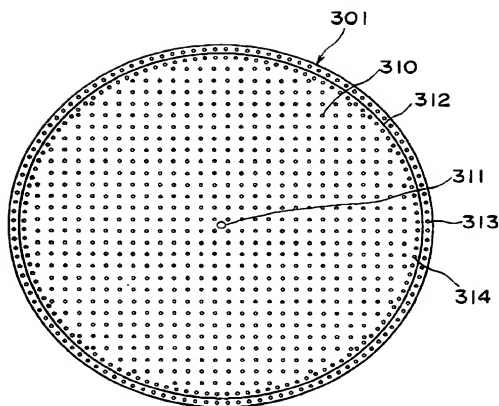
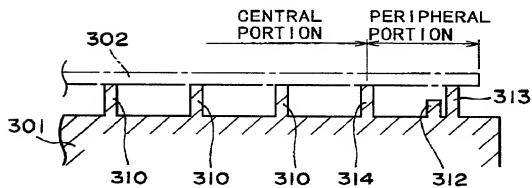
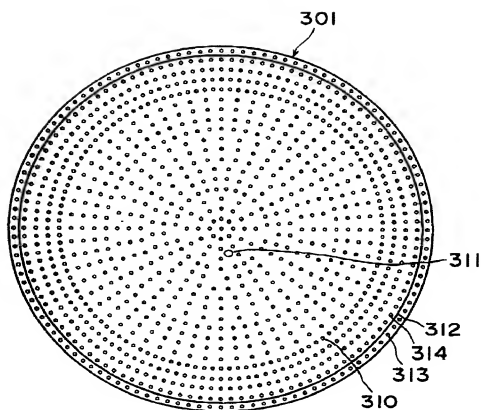
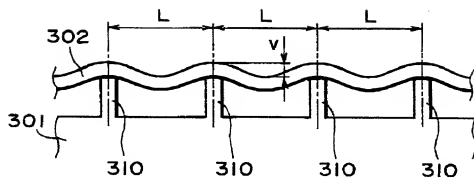
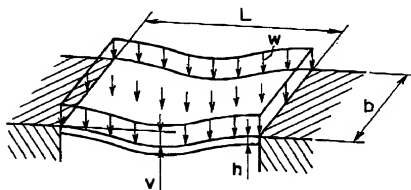


FIG. 10

**FIG. 11A****FIG. 11B**

**FIG. 12**

**FIG. 13****FIG. 14**

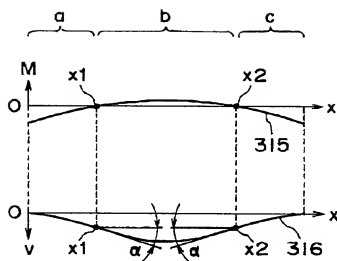


FIG. 15

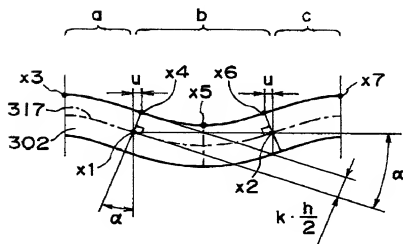


FIG. 16

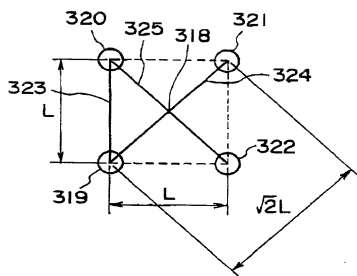


FIG. 17

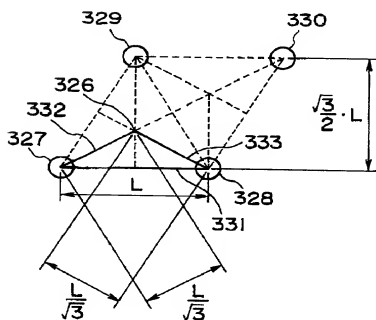


FIG. 18

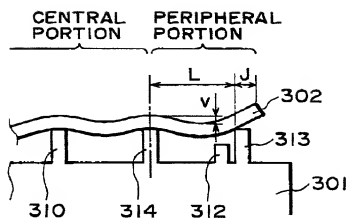


FIG. 19

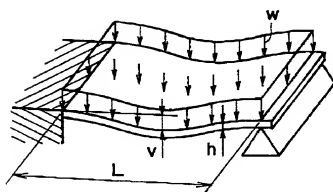


FIG. 20

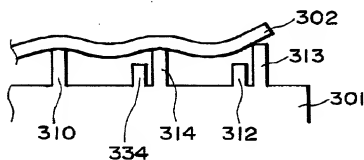


FIG. 21

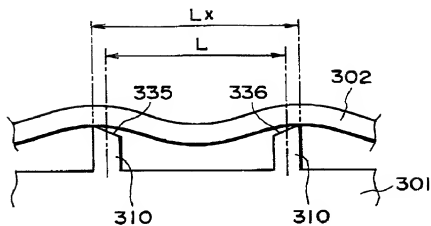


FIG. 22

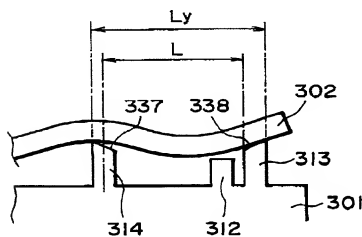


FIG. 23

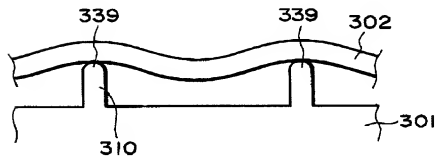


FIG. 24

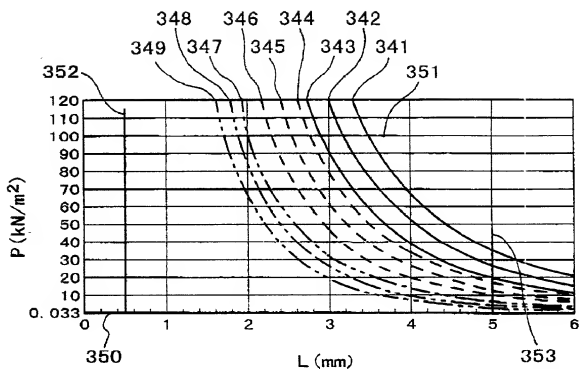


FIG. 25

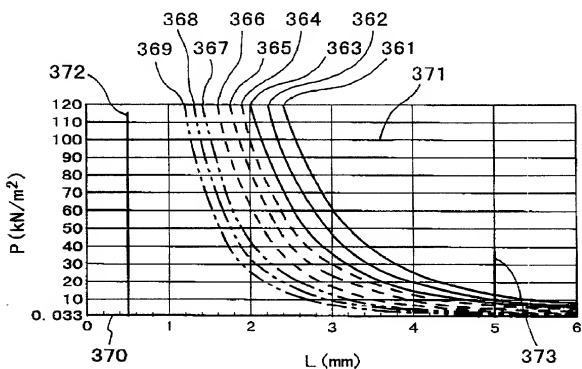


FIG. 26

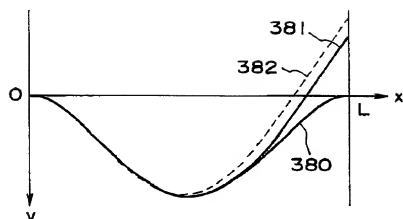


FIG. 27A

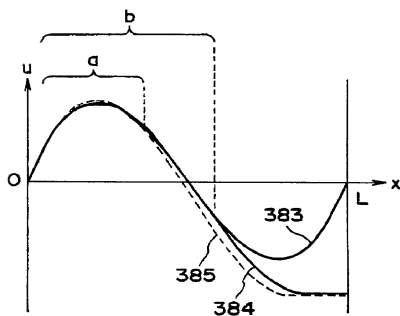
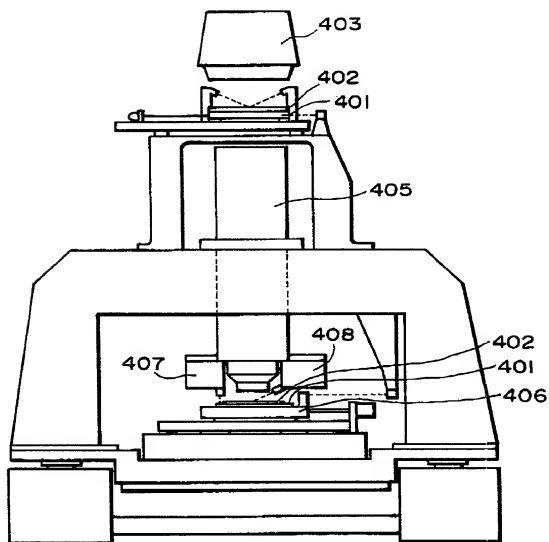
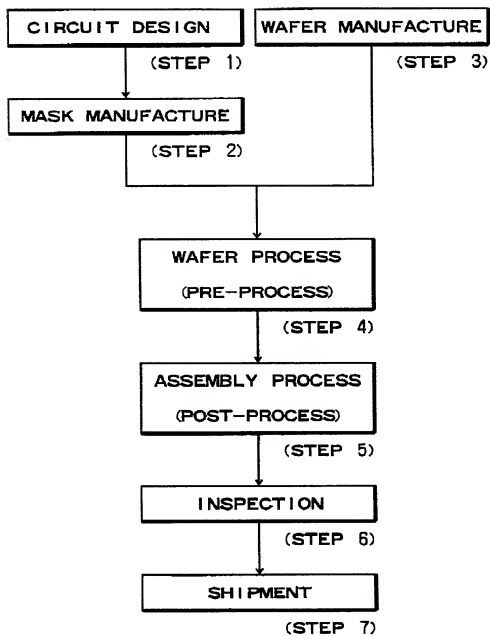


FIG. 27B

**FIG. 28**

**FIG. 29**

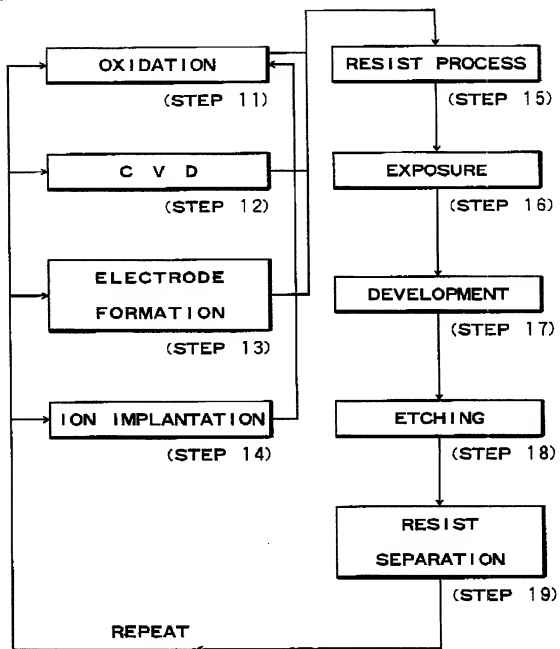
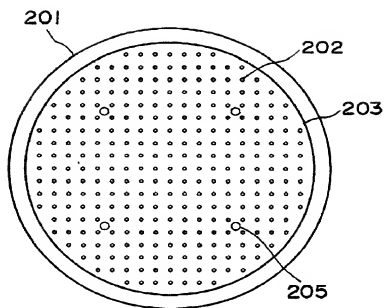


FIG. 30

**FIG. 31**

COMBINED DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY
FOR PATENT APPLICATION
(Page 1)

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled SUBSTRATE
ATTRACTING AND HOLDING SYSTEM FOR USE IN EXPOSURE APPARATUS the

specification of which ☒ is attached hereto ☐ was filed on _____ as United States Application No. or
PCT International Application No. _____ and was amended on _____ (if applicable).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR §1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under 35 U.S.C. §119(a)-(d) or §365(b), of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or §365(a) of any PCT international application which designates at least one country other than the United States, listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate, or PCT international application having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

Country	Application No.	Filed (Day/Mo./Yr.)	(Yes/No) Priority Claimed
JAPAN	11-232125	19 AUGUST 1999	Yes
JAPAN	11-233591	20 AUGUST 1999	Yes
JAPAN	2000-182463	19 JUNE 2000	Yes

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. § 120 of any United States application(s), or § 365(c) of any PCT international application designating the United States, listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States or PCT international application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in 37 C.F.R. § 1.56 which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application.

Application No. _____ Filed (Day/Mo./Yr.) _____ Status (Patented, Pending, Abandoned)

I hereby appoint the practitioners associated with the firm and Customer Number provided below to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith, and direct that all correspondence be addressed to the address associated with that Customer Number:

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
Customer Number: 05514

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

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COMBINED DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY
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